# THE LIFE

OF

# MR. WILLIAM KIFFIN,

UPWARDS OF

SIXTY YEARS PASTOR OF THE BAPTIST CHURCH,
DEVONSHIRE SQUARE, LONDON,

FROM 1639 TO 1701;

AND

ONE OF THE FIVE ALDERMEN APPOINTED BY JAMES II., IN THE YEAR 1687, WHEN THAT POPISH AND DESPOTIC MONARCH DISFRANCHISED THE CITY OF LONDON.

BY

JOSEPH IVIMEY.

"BUT SEEK YE FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS, AND ALL THESE THINGS SHALL BE ADDED UNTO YOU."

LONDON:

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AND SOLD BY HIM, AT 51, DEVONSHIRE STREET, QUEEN SQUARE;
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MDCCCXXXIII.

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TO THE

BAPTIST DENOMINATION

IN ENGLAND AND WALES,

OF WHICH MR. KIFFIN WAS A HIGHLY DISTINGUISHED MINISTER,

AND ESPECIALLY TO THE

CHURCH IN DEVONSHIRE SQUARE, LONDON,

OF WHICH, FOR MORE THAN SIXTY YEARS, HE WAS THE EMINENTLY USEFUL PASTOR,

THIS WORK

IS MOST RESPECTFULLY AND AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED,

PARTICULARLY TO THE RISING GENERATION AMONG THEM,

AS PRESENTING A PATTERN OF PIETY AND INTEGRITY WORTHY THEIR ZEALOUS IMITATION,

BY THEIR SOUL'S WELL-WISHER,

THE AUTHOR.

*January* 1, 1833.

# PREFACE.

SIR Richard Whittington, it is said, when a youth, and very poor, was running away from London, but thinking that he heard "Bow bells" say, "Turn again, Whittington, Lord Mayor of London!" he came back, and, after a variety of wonderful adventures, actually became thrice chief magistrate of the metropolis of England.*

The incidents in the life of Mr. William Kiffin are not less wonderful; as we at one time find him a runaway apprentice, poor, and destitute of friends; and at another raised to an high pitch of dignity, selected and specially appointed by the King to preside over the interests of the same great city.

But in the history of Mr. Kiffin there is no incredibility—no romance. His mind, at the period first referred to, was arrested by a conviction of the importance of religion, and acting under its influence, the principles of integrity, industry, and economy, which he had learned from it, led him to accumulate wealth; and this introduced him to stations of honour and distinction in the world.

That he should have maintained the consistency of the Christian character in the midst of so many snares and temptations, is a proof of the power of godliness to preserve the mind from being "conformed to the

* In the year 1397, 1406, and 1419.

His veneration for the character of Mr. Kiffin, and his perfect agreement with him in all his religious and political sentiments, led him to undertake a work which deserved to have been earlier executed. Having published separate parts of the manuscript before, in his History of the English Baptists, he considered the whole he had collected respecting Mr. Kiffin ought to appear, and in a connected work. Respecting the work, he feels as Mr. Robinson, of Cambridge, did, when he published the *fifth volume of Saurin's Sermons*: "I say nothing of the *translation*, it does not become me. Let those who can, do better. Envy of this kind I have none."

To the blessing of HIM, who was able to make a few loaves and fishes feed a large multitude, and who condescended to regard with approbation the *mite* cast into the treasury of God, the author commits this little work; praying that himself and it may be accepted by HIM, who was graciously pleased to "accept Abel and his offering;" because presented in the faith of HIM, who is "the altar that sanctifieth the giver and the gift."

*January* 22, 1823.

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In consequence of the late Rev. W. Orme, of Camberwell, having published "Remarkable Passages in the Life of William Kiffin," about the time when this volume was prepared for publication, I laid it by, lest it should appear to be unhandsome towards that worthy minister.

Mr. Orme considered some of these "Passages" to be so very "remarkable," as to have concluded (whimsically enough, to be sure,) that the late Sir Walter Scott had founded one of his popular novels upon them. He says, "The appearance of 'Peveril of the Peak,' confirmed my determination to publish. The attentive reader of that work who may deign to cast his eye over the following pages must be struck with various points of resemblance between its puritanical hero, Major Bridgenorth, and the honest and venerable William Kiffin. Both belonged to the same class of religious professors,—both made considerable fortunes during the period of civil dudgeon—both exercised their talents in the field and their gifts in the church—and both were the subjects of heavy domestic misfortunes —involved in religious persecution, or in the calamities of political intrigue. Here, however, I must stop. Bridgenorth is a caricature, the creature of fiction, and designed to ridicule either the profession, or the weaknesses of religious persons. Kiffin is a real character; possessing, it is true, a few peculiarities, but embodying the substantial excellencies of Christianity, which the author of the Scottish novels seems little capable of estimating."*

While I acknowledge the respect to which Mr. Orme was entitled, for publishing the entire manuscript, I complain of his having merged the *pastor of a Baptist church* in the *London merchant*. It is true Mr. Kiffin was a merchant, but it is also true that he subordinated his commercial employments to his ministerial engagements.

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* Introduction, page iv.

I quote with great pleasure and entire approbation the following remarks from the introduction to Mr. Orme's work. "He must be very incapable of estimating happiness, who does not regard with satisfaction the composure, the firmness, the resignation, and religious comfort of William Kiffin, as exhibited in these memorandums. And I desire not to envy the feelings of that man, who can read the account of his grandsons without exclaiming, 'Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my latter end be like his.'

"I am aware of the great difficulty of persuading a person who knows nothing of the peculiar enjoyments which belong to a life of hope and conformity to the will of God;—that the noiseless, purifying, and I add, rational bliss of religion, is far preferable to the intoxicating and short-lived joys of this world. By such, the merry cavalier will always be preferred to the solemn Puritan; and the dashing, swearing Sir Geoffrey will have many more admirers than the grave and virtuous Bridgenorth. Nothing less than the power of the great Teacher himself can convince men of the truth and importance of his own declaration—'Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life.'"*

"Kiffin and his grandsons found the gospel to be the power of God to salvation while they lived—and experienced its strong consolations when they came to die. It will be well, if every reader of this volume be a partaker

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* Introduction, page xi.

of the same principles, do equal justice to their influence, and obtain at last their glorious and interminable results."*

Having lately re-perused my manuscript, I have resolved now to present it to the church of Christ; and especially to that section of it, the denomination to which Mr. Kiffin belonged, because I feel myself laid under strong obligations to endeavour by every means in my power to promote its spiritual prosperity. Indeed, I feel as though I could not die happy without doing so, as I consider Mr. Kiffin to have been one of the most extraordinary persons whom the denomination has produced, both as to the consistency and correctness of his principles and the eminence of his worldly and religious character.

J. I.

51, *Devonshire Street, Queen Square.*
*September* 21, 1832.

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* Introduction, page xviii.

# CONTENTS.

PREFACE . . . . . p. v.—xi

CHAPTER I.

1616—1632.

Mr. Kiffin born 1616—Plague in London, from which he is preserved—Deprived of his parents—Robbed of his property—Put apprentice—Runs away from his master—Hears the Puritan ministers, the Rev. Messrs. Foxley, Norton, Devonport, Moline, and Goodwin—Relation of his conversion—Remarks . 1—12

CHAPTER II.

1632—1641.

Mr. Kiffin attends the Rev. J. Goodwin's ministry—Becomes acquainted with some pious apprentices—Attends the Lord's-day morning lecture at St. Peter's, Cornhill and Christ-church—Agree to spend an hour together previously for prayer, &c. &c.—Becomes a Nonconformist—Joins an independent church—Commences preaching Is persecuted—Becomes a Baptist—Remarkable anecdote—Is committed to the White Lion prison—Lord Brook his friend—Singular deliverance—Baptists brought before the House of Lords—Four peers attend worship in a Baptist congregation—Mr. Kiffin disputes with Dr. Featley on the subject of baptism—Remarks . . . . . 13—25

CHAPTER III.

1641—1660.

Mr. Kiffin sorely afflicted—Recovers—Generous conduct of the physician, Dr. Trigg—Goes to Holland on a mercantile adventure, which succeeds—Devotes himself to his pastoral charge—Engages a young man as a partner in trade, and resumes his mercantile pursuits—Becomes rich, but not by public places or public lands—Navigation act—Had no special favours either from the Parliament or Protector—Signs the Baptist Confession of Faith—

Increase of the Baptists—Mr. Kiffin abused by Grangræna Edwards—Writes to Edwards—Abused by Ricraft—Mr. Patient his co-pastor—Disputes with Dr. Grew and Dr. Bryan at Coventry—Persecuted for opposing infant baptism—A lieutenant-colonel in the London militia—Writes to Baptists in Ireland . 26—28

## CHAPTER IV.

### 1660—1670.

Mr. Kiffin apprehended by General Monk before the Restoration but relieved by the Lord Mayor—Protests against Venner's rebellion—Apprehended upon a charge of treason—Appears before the Privy Council—Chief Justice Foster—Exposes the letter on which he was apprehended as a forgery—Committed to prison as a dissenter—Opposes the monopoly sought by the Hamburgh Company—Examined before a Committee of the House of Commons, and the Privy Council, the King being present—His danger and deliverance—Lord Clarendon his particular friend—Procures the pardon of twelve Baptists at Aylesbury—Apprehended on a charge of high treason—Defends himself before the Duke of Buckingham—Discharged by the Privy Council without payment of fees—His house ransacked by soldiers—Amusing anecdote—Concludes the first part of his Memoirs—Serious address to his children as to the necessity of personal religion—Remarks—Anecdote of Charles II. 39—55

## CHAPTER V.

### 1670—1680.

Mr. Kiffin re-commences his narrative—Death of his eldest son—His second son poisoned at Venice—Overthrows the informers—Death of his excellent wife—Resists successfully the payment of penalties—Bill of Indulgence—Baptist ministers sent to prison—Mr. Kiffin suspected of being connected with Lord William Russell—His son-in-law tried for his life—Base designs to entrap him defeated—Death of Charles II.—His grandsons, the Hewlings, join the Duke of Monmouth—His interesting account of their imprisonment, behaviour, happy deaths—His remarks—Conduct of Jefferies—Western Martyrology—Benjamin Keach—Remarks 56—84

# THE LIFE

# Mr. WILLIAM KIFFIN.

## CHAPTER I.

### 1616—1632.

"I am found of them that sought me not."—Isa. lxi. 1.

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The time at which Mr. Kiffin lived, as well as the incidents through which he passed, and the various important stations which he sustained in commercial, mercantile, political, and religious society, will afford interest to this narrative! His life will comprehend a period commencing with the reign of James I., and ending fifteen years after the Glorious Revolution in 1688; consequently embracing the events of the government of Charles I., Oliver Cromwell, James II., and William III.—As these memoirs too, will be chiefly compiled from his own manuscript, and the evidence of his religious character, affording a pledge of its faithfulness, the reader may rest assured that he will not be caused by fiction; but be led into a discovery of the wonderful providences of God towards one of his humble, obedient and most useful servants.*

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* The family of the Kiffins appear to have come originally from Wales, where the name signifies a *borderer*. *Noble's Memoirs of the House of Cromwell*, vol. ii. p. 454.

The opening scenes of life to Mr. Kiffin were chequered and stormy. Like as when the morning becomes suddenly overcast with clouds, portending the gathering of a storm, which soon bursts on the trembling inexperienced voyager, sweeping away at once his protectors and companions; and driving the vessel upon some rock or quicksand: thus leaving the astonished youth a shipwrecked mariner upon a foreign shore, amongst an inhospitable people; whose seeming pity and officious attentions, are but the harbingers of selfish peculations, and barbarous robberies.

"The first eminent providence," says Mr. Kiffin, which I observed from the Lord towards me, was when I was nine years of age, in the year 1625. The great plague in that year, in the city of London, swept away my relations, who at the time of their death left me with six plague spots upon me, so that nothing but my death could be looked for by all that were about me. But it pleased God of his great goodness to restore me; and being in the hands of such relations as remained alive, I was by them taken care of, although they sought their own advantage by it; and possessed themselves of what was left me. Afterwards failing in business themselves, I never could enjoy but very little thereof.

"When I was thirteen years of age, (in the year 1629.) I was put apprentice to a very mean calling, in which I continued till the year 1631, without any sense of the great deliverance I had received from the hand of God. But at that time, being in my fifteenth year, I began to consider the condition I was in, as to my outward estate; and growing melancholy, I one morning very early, went away from my master, although without any just cause given by him. Wandering up and down the streets, as I passed by St. Antholin's church, I saw people going in, which induced me to return and go in also. The minister,

Mr. Foxley* was preaching upon the Fifth Commandment, and showing the duty of servants to masters, which made me greatly wonder, as I thought he had known me, and was preaching only to me. This had an effect upon me, which caused me immediately to return home to my master, without its being observed by any one that I had gone away. This sermon dwelt much upon my thoughts, and provoked in me a desire to hear some more of them, whom they called *Puritan* ministers.

"Soon after I heard Mr. Norton,† who preached at that place in the mornings, upon that text, Jer. lvii. 18. *There is no peace saith my God unto the wicked.* In this sermon he showed what true peace was, and that no man could obtain it without an interest in Jesus Christ: These statements made a great impression upon my heart; as I was convinced I had not that peace, and how to obtain an interest in Jesus Christ I knew not. This occasioned great perplexity in my soul. I every day saw myself more and

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* Mr. Thomas Foxley was a pious and learned divine, a lecturer at St. Martin's in the Fields, and endured grievous persecution from the intolerance of LAUD. He was kept a close prisoner in the Gate-house, in a chamber not four yards square, for the space of twenty months, without pen, ink, or paper, or the access of any one of his friends, except his wife, who with the utmost difficulty obtained leave to visit him during a season of extreme sickness. By this imprisonment he was ruined in his circumstances; his wife and four small children being exposed to misery and want. He was set at liberty by the Long Parliament in 1640, and in 1644 was one of the witnesses against Laud at his trial. He was after this a popular minister in London.—*Brooks' Lives of the Puritans*, vol. iii. p. 497.

† Mr. John Norton was a very accomplished and useful preacher. Refusing to conform he went to New England in 1635, and was in the utmost danger of being lost upon his passage. He laboured for seventeen years at Ipswich in New England, and at the death of Mr. Cotton succeeded him at Boston. He died April 5, 1663, aged 57. (See an account of his labours and writings in the *Lives of the Puritans*, vol. ii. p. 421.)

more sinful and vile: pray I could not; I thought myself shut up in unbelief; and although I desired to mourn under a sense of my sins, yet I saw there was no proportion in my sorrow suitable to that evil nature which I found working strongly in my soul. I only took up resolutions to attend to the most powerful preaching, which accordingly I did; by means of which, I obtained many times some relief from the belief of a possibility that notwithstanding my sinful state I might at last find mercy. . . . . I took up resolutions to leave off sinful practices, and although to will was sometimes present, yet how to perform I had no power."

This ingenuous statement of the means by which young Kiffin's mind was first brought to a sense of his guilty and lost condition as a sinner against God, leads one to admire the riches of the divine goodness, and the abundance of sovereign mercy towards this "chosen vessel." One trembles to think of the precipice to which this run-away apprentice had arrived, when at the perilous age of fifteen or sixteen, discontented and melancholy, destitute of parents or friends, he was strolling through the streets of a corrupt metropolis, miserable and hopeless. But for the tender mercy of God guiding his feet into the way of peace, and to the house of prayer, he might have formed associations which would have gradually led him on from sin to sin, until he had become a terror to himself, and a curse to society. What an illustration this of what Ezekiel terms "the time of love," by the compassion shown towards a helpless infant, cast out and left to perish. So true is it, as to the providence of God, towards the election of grace—*I am found of them that sought me not, I have made myself manifest towards those who enquired not after me: I said Behold me, behold me, to a nation that was not called by my name.* Isa. lxv. 1. The inspired apostle Jude, thus expresses the sentiment—*Them who*

*are sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus, and called.* Jude, 1.

Mr. Kiffin thus proceeds,—"It pleased God that after some time, I heard Mr. Davenport,* in Coleman-street, upon that text, 1 John i. 7. *And the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.* He showed the efficacy of the blood of Christ both to pardon and cleanse from sin; and answered many objections that the unbelieving heart of man would make against that full satisfaction which Jesus Christ had made for poor sinners. I found that many of those were such as I had made in my own heart:—as the sense of my unworthiness, and willingness to be better before I would come to Jesus Christ for life, with many others of the like kind. This sermon was of great satisfaction to my soul. I thought I felt my heart greatly to close with this riches and freeness of grace which God held forth to poor sinners in Jesus Christ. I found my fears to vanish, and my heart filled with love to Jesus Christ; I saw sin viler than ever, and felt my heart more abhorring it.

"I soon after heard Mr. Norton upon that text, Luke i. 69, *And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David.* He proved in the sermon, that Jesus Christ was mightily accomplished with power and

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*Mr. John Davenport is called in Mather's History of New England, p. 52, "Our holy and famous Mr. John Davenport, one of the most eminent Puritans of those days. He was of Brazen-nose College, Oxford, and took the degree of B. D. He was an universal scholar, and his greatest enemies acknowledged him the best of preachers. The ablest men about London were his nearest friends. In 1633 to avoid persecution he gave up his parochial charge in Coleman-street and went to Holland. Here his objecting to the promiscuous baptizing of children led to his being removed from the English Church at Amsterdam. Returning to London he with others obtained the patent for the Massechusett's Colony. He arrived in America in 1637. He in his old age, 1667, accepted a call to the Church at Boston: and died March 15, 1670, aged 72. The Indians in his neighbourhood used to call him 'So big study man.'"

ability to save his people: my faith was now exceedingly strengthened in the fulness of that satisfaction which Jesus Christ had given to the Father for poor sinners, and was enabled to believe my interest therein. Now I found some ability to pray and to meditate upon the riches of this grace, so that I could say with David, *when I awake I am still with thee.* I found the power of inbred corruption weakened, and my heart on fire with holy love to Christ: and being young, and knowing little of the deceits of my own heart, I thought I should never find the power and strength of sin and corruption rise in my heart any more; and did much wonder when I heard ancient Christians so much complain of the strength of sin and corruption that they daily found in their own souls. In this frame of peace and rest I continued for nearly three months; rejoicing in the grace of God, and was ready to say that by his favor he had made my mountain so strong that I should never be moved.

"A new storm after this began to arise in my soul. Under the comfort and peace I had enjoyed, I thought the power of inbred corruption so broken within me that I should never have found it prevail over me any more. I began to find my confidence in God abate, and my comforts to lessen, and the motions of sin to revive with greater strength than ever in my soul; so that in every duty I performed, my heart was so carnal that duties were a burden to me, and by reason thereof I was a burden to myself. My comforts were gone, and in all the duties of religion I was as a man that had no strength; yet I durst not omit the performance of any, having some secret hopes that the Lord would not utterly cast me off in displeasure, although my fears were stronger than my hopes. I was daily questioning whether all that formerly was enjoyed by me, might be any more than such a *taste of the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come*, as those had experienced who yet fell away.

"Many weeks I continued in this great distress, keeping all things to myself, being ashamed to open the state of my mind to any. At last, being in the company of some Christians who were talking about the least measure of true grace; I understood them to say, (although indeed it arose from my mistaking their meaning) that the least measure of true grace was for a man to know he had grace. I therefore presently drew this conclusion, without any further examination, that I was then the person who had no grace. I was hereby confirmed in my former dark thoughts, that all my enjoyments were but mere flashes; which greatly increased my sorrow, and the distress of my soul which pressed me down exceedingly;—and surely had not the Lord been gracious to relieve me in a little time, I must have sunk under the burden.

"But it pleased his Divine Majesty to give me seasonable relief, for about a week after, having an opportunity, I went to hear Mr. Moline, who preached at the church by London-stone. It was a preparation sermon to the Sacrament, and in the beginning of his discourse, he laid down this proposition for truth: that to prepare a man for a right receiving the Sacrament, it was absolutely necessary he should have grace, and the least measure of grace was sufficient, and he then fell upon the question, what was the least measure of grace? But before he proceeded to answer the question, he proved that for a man to know he had grace could not be the least measure of grace, but a very large degree of grace, being a reflect act of grace, &c.:—he then gave several characters of the least measure of true grace, &c. I greatly wondered within myself to hear him fall upon that subject which did so greatly and particularly concern me; and also found some small beginnings of those signs of true grace in my own soul which he had laid down to be such. This wonderfully relieved my hopes again, God being pleased to give

me some strength to depend upon his grace more than I had received for many weeks before; my resolutions were now strengthened to follow God, and to wait upon him in every duty: whatsoever at the last, his pleasure might be towards me. It pleased God too, greatly to encourage me from two scriptures which were with great power brought to my thoughts. The first of these was, Isa. xxx. 18, *Therefore will the Lord wait that he may be gracious unto you, and therefore will he be exalted that he may have mercy upon you; for the Lord is a God of judgment: blessed are all they that wait for him.* Meditating upon these words filled me with astonishment:—that the great God of heaven and earth should reckon himself exalted to show mercy to poor sinners, and to encourage such to wait and not be discouraged; and from this consideration, that he was a God of judgment, and knew the fittest season to give in what a poor soul waited for. The other text was Isai. l. 10. in which he that walketh in darkness and has no light, is exhorted to trust in the name of the Lord, and to stay himself upon his God. This latter scripture it pleased God to make very useful to me, especially reading Mr. Thomas Goodwin's* book on the subject, entitled, "A Child of Light walking in Darkness." By means of these two scriptures, it pleased God to deliver me from those temptations of casting off waiting upon God, in the use of all means, which had formerly assaulted me.

"But yet, I was ready to run to my own righteousness. I mean, to expect something in myself by which I might obtain greater victory over sin, and venture to believe in

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* Dr. Thomas Goodwin, a very celebrated Independent minister, founder of the churches in Lime-street and Fetter-lane. He attended Oliver Cromwell upon his death bed. He died February 23, 1679, in the 80th year of his age. (See Wilson's History of Dissenting Churches; vol. ii. 220, 429.)

Christ for pardon. Under the influence of these thoughts, being diligent in hearing the best and ablest ministers, I still found them pressing the necessity of a deep humiliation by the law as the only way God took to convert a sinner. I was the more convinced they went right by reading Mr. Hooker's book of the Soul's Preparation for Christ, so that I concluded that I had never experienced those deep convictions; and therefore that I surely had reason to question the work of grace upon my soul; and such thoughts dwelt very long with me. I had now arrived at the age of seventeen years, and was resolved to make a further search into my own heart, and to neglect no opportunity of hearing the word: by means of which I found many supports from the Lord.

"At the end of the year 1632, it pleased God to bring Mr. John Goodwin to London.* I attended upon his

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* He was from Norfolk, and a Fellow of Queen's College, Cambridge, in 1617. Granger says "he introduced Arminianism among the Calvinists, and that he was a man by himself: was against every man, and every man against him." As he publicly defended the execution of Charles I., it is wonderful he escaped after the Restoration. It is a little singular that Mr. Kiffin should have afterwards recommended a work, which Mr. Goodwin had been the occasion of producing; this was Mr. Samuel How's sermon entitled, "The Sufficiency of the Spirit's teaching, without Human Learning; or a Discourse tending to prove that Human Learning is no help to the spiritual understanding of the Word of God." The anecdote respecting Mr. Goodwin and Mr. How is thus recorded by Mr. Wilson, in his History of the Dissenting Churches, vol. iv. page 136. "In the year 1639, Mr. John Goodwin, Minister of Coleman-street parish, had made an observation that was designed to enforce the necessity of human learning for those who undertook the office of preachers. To this it was answered that to preach the Gospel there was no necessity for human learning, of which Mr. Samuel How was a sufficient example; and that if Mr. Goodwin would send him a text he should hear him preach from it. This was accordingly done, and Mr. How preached from 2 Peter, iii. 16. *As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood: which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, &c. &c.* Mr. Goodwin who heard the sermon was far

ministry and found it very profitable. Delivering his judgment about the way of God's dealings in the conversion of sinners, he showed that the terrors of the law were not of necessity to be preached to prepare the soul for Christ,

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from being satisfied with it, as appeared by the ludicrous observation which he made at its conclusion; 'ye have made a calf, and danced about it.' In the fashion of those times, Mr. Goodwin was desired publicly to prove his assertion, or in other words to show how Mr. How had perverted the Scriptures; but this it seems he declined. It was determined by Mr. How's friends that his sermon should be printed; but if we are to believe what one of them says, Mr. Goodwin took a singular method to prevent it. He says that Mr. Goodwin possessed such an influence over the London press, that Mr. How could get no one to print it for him, so that he was obliged to send it over to Holland to be printed. In an edition of the sermon before me, there is a postscript written by Mr. Kiffin, who thus speaks of Mr. How: "Having been acquainted with the author before his death, and tasted the Spirit of light which God had more than ordinary poured out on him, by which he was enabled to minister seasonable words, to the refreshing of many weary souls; and also to contend against those corruptions and inventions which men have brought into the worship of God, raging like the mighty waters against all the servants of God which opposed them in the same; I mean the powers which ruled in that day, the weight of whose persecutions this author, while he lived, had his share, and when he died they would not allow him what they called a *Christian burial:* therefore his friends were obliged to lay his body in the highway, of whom I may say '*the world was not worthy.*'" That eminent man, Mr. Roger Williams, founder of the state of Rhode Island in America, calls him "that eminent Christian witness, and prophet of Christ, even that despised and yet beloved Samuel How, who being by calling a cobbler, and without human learning, which yet in its place and sphere he honoured; who yet I say, by searching the Holy Scriptures grew so excellent a textuary, or scripture-learned man, that few of those high Rabbies, who scorn to mend or make a shoe, could aptly or readily, from the Holy Scripture out-go him." *

The body of Mr. How having been refused interment in the churchyard of Shoreditch, was interred in St. Agnes-la-Clear. Mr. Williams, in the sermon before mentioned, says, "being attended with many hundred of God's people; though forced to seek a bed in the highway, his burial was honourable."

It is certain that neither Mr. Kiffin nor Mr. Williams undervalued

* *The Hireling Ministry none of Christ's, London*, 1652.

because in the nature and tendency of them, they drove the soul further off from Christ; answering very many objections and scriptures produced by other ministers to prove the contrary. This was of great use to me, so far as to satisfy me, that God had not tied himself to any such way of converting a sinner; but according to his good pleasure took several ways of bringing a soul to Jesus Christ. I had for some time seen the want of Christ, and believed that it was by him only I must expect pardon; and had also seen the worth and excellencies that were in him above all other objects; so that I now felt my soul to rest upon and trust in him."

These various and faithful exercises which young Kiffin endured, arose from his ignorance of the nature of faith in the record which God had given of his Son, that eternal life is in his Son, for all who hope in his mercy and depend upon his atonement. It is evident, however, that these convictions were very much increased by the injudicious manner in which the subject had been represented by some, of whom he thought highly as ministers of the Gospel. To make any degree of conviction of sin, a qualification for receiving Christ, or a measure of grace, even though it were the least degree of grace, essential to the exercise of faith and hope, would necessarily increase the darkness and misery of his mind, and encourage the self-righteous feeling of his heart, to go about to establish his own righteousness, rather than to

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literature for the public ministry, though they would doubtless have despised the opinion of Mr. Goodwin, that it was absolutely *necessary* in order for any one to be able to preach the Gospel. The following quaint lines appear in the title page of Mr. How's Sermon:—

"What, How? How now? hath How such learning found,
To throw Art's curious image to the ground;
Cambridge and Oxford may their glory now
Veil to a *Cobbler*, if they knew but How."

submit himself to the righteousness of God. No sooner was he convinced that Christ was the end of the law for righteousness, and that repenting sinners were encouraged to trust in the righteousness of Christ, and that it was "to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly," that the righteousness upon which the sinner trusted was "imputed to him for righteousness," than Mr. Kiffin found that thus "believing, he entered into rest;" and being "justified by faith he had peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." He now found, that the law which worked wrath was answered by looking to Him who had been made a curse for all who believe in his name; and that the sin which dwelt in him was crucified through faith in the sacrifice of Christ, who had made an end of sin and brought in an everlasting righteousness; he found too, that pardon, and peace, and holiness were the fruits of righteousness through faith in Jesus Christ. His example affords a satisfactory instance of the importance of evangelical statements as to the way of salvation, and of the happy and blessed influence of those principles on the mind of awakened sinners. This was the blessing Paul sought so ardently for the Romans—*Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye might abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost*. Rom. xv. 13.

# CHAPTER II.

## 1632—1641.

"The meek will he guide in judgment: the meek will he teach his way."—*Psalm* xxv. 9.

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In the year 1632, Mr. Kiffin attended constantly the ministry of the Rev. John Goodwin, who was vicar of St. Stephen, Coleman Street. This minister not being a very strict conformist, soon felt the power of the protestant-popish Archbishop Laud, who ruled the English church, and the subjects of the king, with a rod of iron. In the account given by his Grace, of the state of his province in 1637, Mr. John Goodwin, vicar of Coleman Street, is mentioned among others as having been "convened for a breach of the canons, and as having submitted himself."

It was not probable that Mr Kiffin, who now felt the value of the gospel, would be satisfied to continue long connected with a society whose minister would consent to receive any part of the discipline of the church of Christ from mere human authority; and therefore it is not wonderful that he should at length come out from among them, and resolve to take his lot with the persecuted and despised dissenting Puritans.

"About this time," [1634] says he, "I became acquainted with several young men that diligently attended the means; to whom it had pleased God to make known much of himself and his grace. These being apprentices as well as I, had no opportunities of converse but on the Lord's-days. It being our constant practice to attend the morning lecture, which began at six o'clock, both at [St. Peter's] Cornhill, and Christchurch, we appointed to

meet together an hour before, to spend it in prayer and communicating what experiences we had received from the Lord to each other; or else to repeat some sermon we had previously heard. After a little time, we also read some portion of scripture, and spake from it according as it pleased God to enable us. In these exercises I found very great advantage, and by degrees did arrive to some small measure of knowledge, finding the study of the scriptures very pleasant and delightful to me: which I attended to as it pleased God to give me opportunities.

"Mr. Davenport, Mr. Hooker,* and others leaving the kingdom at that time, in regard they could not conform, put me upon examining the grounds of their conduct. For this purpose I furnished myself with all the books and manuscripts I could get, which upon perusing, comparing what I read with the scriptures, I found that God was always very jealous of his worship, and had left many examples of his severity when any had added any thing thereto: as in the cases of Nadab and Abihu, Lev. x. 2, and of Uzzah touching the ark, 2 Sam. vi. 6. Being myself very weak, and finding many able ministers that did conform, I applied myself for satisfaction to those I judged the most able. But I found that instead of satisfying me they rather despised my youthful years, shewing more passion than reason. And yet those very men, some years after, condemned in the Synod the same things as

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* Mr. Thomas Hooker became, Mather says, "the Light of the Western churches, the renowned pastor of Hartford Church, and pillar of the Connecticut Colony in New England." He was, before his leaving England, a minister at Chelmsford, in Essex, but was obliged to relinquish it because he was not in all things a conformist. To avoid the Star Chamber, he fled to Holland about 1632, and became minister to the church at Rotterdam. In 1633, he escaped from persecution by going to New England. He died July 7, 1647, aged 61. Mather, calls him "one of the first three."—*Mather's Hist. New England*, p. 57—67.

unlawful, which they were offended with in me, when I desired them to give me satisfaction concerning them.

"Finding myself greatly disappointed as to the satisfaction I had hoped to have received from them, I was the more provoked to beg earnestly of God to direct me, and the more diligent to search the scriptures: from which I received much satisfaction. I was also much helped by hearing Mr. Glover, that went to New England, and Mr. Burrow who some time after went to Holland.

"I soon after this joined myself to an independent congregation, being about twenty-two years of age, with a resolution as soon as it pleased God to open a way to go to New England, but the providence of God prevented me; and in a little time it pleased God to provide for me a suitable yoke-fellow, who was with me in judgment, and who was joined to the same congregation with me."

This church was the first independent congregation which had been formed in England. It had been formed in the year 1616, under the care of Mr. Henry Jacob.* At the time Mr. Kiffin joined it, about 1634, the pastor was Mr. John Lathorp, who in the same year went to America, accompanied by about thirty of his congregation; † and with whom it should seem Mr. Kiffin had resolved to go, but was prevented. He thus proceeds with his narration:—

"Being then in the heat of the Bishop's severities, we

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* Mr. Jacob went in 1624 to Virginia, where he soon after died. See article "First Independent Church in England," in Wilson's History, &c. p. 40.

† "Mr. Lathorp, and several of his friends, were confined two years in the Gate-house and the New Prison. As no bail would be taken for him he petitioned the king, Charles I., to permit him to leave the kingdom, which was graciously permitted him: though a similar favour was refused to Oliver Cromwell, John Hampden, Dr. Owen, and others, who, by order of the king, was obliged to return from the boat in which they were putting off from land." *Mather's History.*

were forced to meet very early in the morning, and continue together till night. And amongst them, at their desire, I improved those small abilities God was pleased to give me. And although many times our meetings were disturbed, yet I was kept out of the hands of persecutors. Meeting one Lord's-day at a house on Tower-hill, as I was coming out of the meeting several rude fellows were about the door, and many stones were flung at me, which did me no hurt. One of these fell upon my eye, but without any great prejudice to it, so I escaped out of their hands.

"About a year afterwards, [1635] I was sent for by a poor man, a smith, who lived in Nightingale-lane, and lay very sick. When I came to him he was so wasted, as to be reduced almost to skin and bones. He asked me if I knew him. I said I did not. He replied, that he knew me; for, said he, 'I am the man who disturbed your meeting at Tower-hill, and gathered the people together to stone you. At that time I was, I think, strong as most men were, but on my returning from the place I fell ill, and am wasted in my body to what you now see me.' He intreated me, if I had any compassion for such a vile wretch as he was, that I would pray for him; which I accordingly did:—but he died the same day. Looking at this as a remarkable providence, I thought it not amiss to record it."

At this time, Mr. Henry Jessey, then a Pædo-baptist, was the pastor of the church. He had succeeded Mr. Lathorp, September 1637. About a year after this, Mr. Kiffin and some others becoming Baptists, removed from the church, and joined the people, who, four years before, [1633] had been dismissed from it to form a Baptist church at Wapping, under the care of Mr. John Spilsbury.*

* From this *first* Calvinistic-baptist church, the churches in Prescott Street, and Little Aylifie Street, have descended.

The reasons which induced Mr. Kiffin to become a Baptist are thus related by himself:—"I used all endeavours, by converse with all such as were able, and also by diligently searching the scriptures, with earnest desires to God that I might be directed in a right way of worship; and after some time concluded, that the safest way was to follow the footsteps of the flock, namely, that order laid down by Christ and his apostles, and practised by the primitive christians in their times; which I found to be, that after conversion they were baptized, added to the church, and 'continued in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and breaking of bread and prayer,' according to which I thought myself bound to be conformable." About the year 1653, he left Mr. Spilsbury, and became the pastor of a Baptist church, which for many years met in Fisher's Folley,* now Devonshire Square.

The spirit of the times did not suffer him to be long at rest. Very serious attacks had been made both upon the civil and religious liberties of the people. The High Commission Court, under the direction of Laud and the prelates, was guilty of the most horrid barbarities, so that the people groaned for emancipation from their worse than Egyptian task-masters. It was not probable that such a zealous and intrepid minister as Mr. Kiffin would be suffered to continue at liberty, however secretly the meetings might be conducted; accordingly we find him soon after called to endure imprisonment for the sake of a good conscience. He thus relates the interesting story.

"Not long after (1640) the Parliament began to sit; but

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* The original meeting-house upon this scite, after the fire of London, in 1666, was wrested from the Baptists, and used for an Episcopal congregation, till the parish churches were re-built. It is said, that Sir Robert Titchborne, Knight, and Alderman of London, preached here frequently during the Interregnum. *Wilson's Dissenting Churches*, vol. i. p. 401.

before any difference had arisen between the King and them, being at a meeting in Southwark, I was taken and carried before some justices of the peace, and the assizes being the next day, I was bound over to answer for my conduct there. Judge Mallet sitting as the judge, I was by him committed to the White Lion prison, and remained there for some time, until that judge returned home from riding the circuit through Kent. While I was in the prison, by the malice of a prisoner whose chamber was under mine, the prisoners in the common gaol were incensed against me to do me mischief. Several of these had been condemned for capital offences, but had been reprieved; and others had been committed for great robberies. Accordingly on a Lord's-day evening, several of them came up to my chamber, my door being open, with only my wife and child, and a maid servant with me. One Jackson, a noted rogue, came before them, having a great trumpet in his hand, asking me what company I had there: to whom I replied, I had none but what he saw, and having upon my table some Spanish tobacco, which a friend had left me, I asked him if he would accept of it. He looked wistly on me; several other of his company being behind him in the room took it and thanked me, I then asked them if he and the rest would drink, which they did. Then Jackson turned to them and bid them go out of the room, and bidding me farewell, went away. The man's chamber being under mine, that had set them on, finding the door shut they endeavoured to break it open, which I hearing, went down and asked them what they meant to do. Jackson told me that he was the man who had engaged them to knock me upon the head, but they would do his work for him although they should be hanged the next day; but at last, through much intreaty, they were persuaded to desist. This was a signal providence of God towards me, to preserve me from such bloody men.

"But my neighbour who had set them on, not effecting his end, had prepared a charge against me to deliver to Judge Mallet upon his return; wherein he set forth that several persons coming to my chamber I had preached treasonable words against the King, and delivered the same to the judge: which charge was very false, God knoweth. My wife and friends applying themselves to the judge to take bail, he refused; upon which I went with my keeper to Lord Brooke, who told me he would speak to the judge on my behalf. Going into the House of Lords, he in a little time after came out to me. Standing in the Court of Requests, he told me, that he had been speaking to the judge, but could prevail nothing; the judge telling him he had a very great charge against me, and waited but the leisure of the house to acquaint them with it. I told my lord, that I was not the least conscious in myself of any such thing; and my lord told me he would do the utmost he could for me when he heard what it was. In the mean time, while I stood expecting further trouble to attend me, unknown to me, several men were at the bar of the House of Commons, as witnesses against the said judge, for encouraging a petition in his last sitting at the assizes at Maidstone; which the Commons having heard, esteeming what he had done of dangerous consequence, some members of that House passed through the Court of Requests to the House of Lords, and there charged the said judge, who was that day committed to the Tower, and I was released from my imprisonment, the said judge having been thus prevented from exhibiting the charge, as he had intended, against me. Thus it pleased God to deliver me out of the hands of malicious men, causing the wrath of men to praise him, and the remainder thereof he restrained."

Before this chapter is brought to a close, it may be proper to notice some events with which it is highly probable Mr. Kiffin was connected.

In the journals of the House of Lords, in January 1640-1, there is mention made of some "Anabaptists, recommended to the justice of the House by his Majesty." Between sixty and seventy had been taken on the Sunday afternoon before, in the time of divine service, by the constables and church-wardens of St. Saviour's, in the house of Richard Sturgess, where they said they met "to teach and edify one another in Christ." Six of them were brought before the House on the 18th inst.—they were admonished not to meet in a private house again, but to attend worship in their parish church, and were discharged. The next Lord's-day four of the peers attended their place of meeting, to observe their manner of worship. One of them, in all probability, was Robert Lord Brooke, mentioned so respectfully in the foregoing narrative by Mr. Kiffin.

This event doubtless led the doughty champion, Dr. FEATLY, to challenge them to a public disputation in the presence of Sir John Lenthal,* the justice of peace, by whom they had been brought before the House of Lords. The doctor afterwards published a quarto work, entitled "The Dippers dipt; or the Anabaptists ducked and plunged over head and ears at a disputation in Southwark." The doctor calls one of his opponents "a brewer's clerk." This, it is supposed, was Mr. Kiffin, as he is said to have been employed by the famous republican, Mr. John Lilburn, who was in that business.

In the account of this disputation, Dr. Featly, who calls Mr. Kiffin, *Cufin*, says, "This *Cufin* is said to be one of the first that subscribed the Anabaptists' confession, printed in 1644, London." By the doctor's own shewing, he found him no despicable opponent. The following is a specimen of the dialogue:—

"*Mr. Kiffin.*—What is the nature of a visible church? What is the matter and form of it? Or what is the visible

* Marshal of the King's Bench Prison.

church of Christ made up of, by authority of the scriptures?

"*Dr. Featly.*—Your question is, *Quid constituit visibilem Ecclesiam?* What makes a visible church?

"*Mr. K.*—Yes.

"*Dr. F.*—I answer, according to the scriptures, and the joint consent of all protestant churches in the world, French, Dutch, &c., in the harmony of confessions, that the sincere preaching of the word, and the due administration of the sacraments, constitutes or makes a true visible church. The Papists make many notes of the true church, as antiquity, universality, succession, miracles, and divers others; but the reformed church makes but two only, namely, those above mentioned.

"*Mr. K.*—What is a true particular visible church?

"*Dr. F.*—A particular company of men, professing the christian faith, known by the two marks before mentioned, the sincere preaching of the word, and the due administration of the sacraments.

"*Mr. K.*—Is the church of England such a church?

"*Dr. F.*—It is so.

"*Mr. K.*—How prove you that?

"*Dr. F.*—First, I answer I need not to prove it, but you are to disprove it. For as Hooker teacheth, in his Ecclesiastical Policie, they who are in possession are not bound to prove the right, but they who are about to thrust them out are to disprove their right, and bring a better title for themselves. Secondly, to give you further satisfaction, thus I prove the church of *England* to be such a church: Every church in which the word of God is sincerely preached, and the sacraments lawfully and rightly administered, is such a church; but in the church of *England* the word is sincerely preached, and the sacraments lawfully administered. *Ergo*, the church of *England* is such a church.

"*Mr. K.*—I deny that in the church of England the word is sincerely preached, or the sacraments rightly administered.

"*Dr. F.*—I have here two things to prove,—1. that the church of England is agreeable to God's word.—2. the sacraments are rightly administered in it. First, the doctrine of the church of *England* is contained in the thirty-nine articles. Secondly, the due administration of the sacraments in the communion. But both the one and the other are agreeable to God's word:—*Ergo*, the preaching of the word, and administration of the sacraments, in the church of England, are agreeable to God's word.

"*Mr. K.*—I deny that the thirty-nine articles, and the Book of Common Prayer, are agreeable to God's Word.

"*Dr. F.*—I will prove that the book of articles is agreeable to God's word. In the book of Articles, the first, which concerneth the blessed Trinity; the 2d, 3d, 4th, which concerneth the incarnation of Christ Jesus, his death and resurrection; the 5th, which concerneth the Holy Ghost, the perfection of scriptures, and the eighteen following, which impugn popery, are agreeable to God's word; and you cannot name any one of the rest which is not agreeable. Therefore they are all agreeable. If you know any one that is not agreeable, instance it, and I will presently show how it is agreeable to scripture.

"*Mr. K.*—For the thirty-nine articles, I know not what they are. I never saw them that I remember.

"*Dr. F.*—Then for aught you know they are all conformable to scripture; at least you can except against none of them. Now for the book of Common Prayer: it consists partly of psalms, epistles, and gospels, partly of prayers, and the form and manner of the administration of the sacraments. But the former are taken out of scripture, the latter are agreeable to it. What do you except against it?

"*Mr. K.*—I except against your administration of baptism. It is not rightly administered in your church: for you baptize children, and that is not agreeable to God's word: if you say it is, how do you prove it by scripture?"

This Dr. F. undertook to prove out of scripture, but before he alleged any text of scripture for it, another Anabaptist interposed.

After a long disputation between the doctor and this person, who, according to him, had "yielded the buckler," &c., Mr. Kiffin resumed the debate. "I pray you, Mr. Doctor, come to the point: how prove you the baptism of infants to be lawful, by the word of God?

"*Dr. F.*—It seems you will willingly fall upon no other point but this of Anabaptism; which heresy was condemned near fifteen hundred years ago.

"*Mr. K.*—Sir, that is neither here nor there, you know what the woman of Samaria said, (John iv.) Our fathers worshipped in this mountain, and ye say, that at *Jerusalem* is the place where men ought to worship; they continued in an error about 2,000 years."

"*Dr. F.*—You are mistaken in your chronology, for there were not 2,000 years between Jacob and Christ. But to let that, your error, pass, the Samaritans were indeed in an error a long time; but this is no error, but a doctrine of truth, that children ought to be baptized. There are three sorts of arguments of great force with all understanding men, the first and chiefest from scripture; secondly, from consent of the universal church; thirdly, from evident reason. I will prove all these for the baptism of children."

To which, it is said, a Scotchman replied, "We desire to have it proved by scripture."

The Doctor produced the texts usually quoted, which were unsatisfactory to the Baptists. The debate then took a turn respecting the necessity of episcopal ordination,

&c. &c. At length, Dr. Featly conceded. "It is true, in time of persecution we read of one *Frumentius*, a layman, who, in his travels converted some to the christian religion by scriptures." To this Mr. Kiffin replied, "That is all we desire to do, as *Frumentius did.*"

Not wishing to tire the reader, the issue of the conference was, (according to Dr. Featly!) "first, the knights, ladies, and gentlemen, gave the doctor great thanks; secondly, three of the Anabaptists went away discontented; the fourth, seemed in part satisfied, and desired a second meeting; but the next day conferring with the rest of that sect, he altered his resolution; and neither he, nor any of that sect, ever since that day, troubled the doctor, or any other minister in the Borough with any second challenge!" *

The Baptists found an able advocate in Robert Lord Brooke, in his treatise upon Episcopacy. "We have often," says his lordship,† "seen some of these preachers before the highest tribunal in the kingdom: for we thought it unreasonable (with those in the Acts) to condemn any before they were heard."—And in reply to those who had taunted them with being mechanics and illiterate persons, he says, "nor are they so tied to their outward callings, but if the church shall think it fit, they are ready to give up all, and apply themselves wholly to the study of the scriptures and work of the ministry. In the mean time they follow their callings, not living idly, or going up and down telling as busy bodies, but being diligent to serve

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* This work was first published in Jan. 1645. The extracts are made from the *sixth* Edition, printed 1651.

† "A discourse opening the nature of that Episcopacy which is exercised in England; wherein, with all humility, are represented some considerations tending to the much desired peace, and long expected reformation of this our mother church. By the Right Honourable Robert Lord Brooke," pp. 109, 114. Octavo, pp. 124, printed London, 1641.

God both with their hands, hearts also, yea, and tongue too, if God shall call them and give opportunity, as well as abilities."

To persons of the Baptist denomination, this account will be peculiarly interesting, as it traces up the river to its source; the spreading tree to the grain of mustard seed. The call of Abraham to become the founder of the Jewish nation, and the first stone in the building of the visible church of God, strongly resembles the case of Mr. Kiffin, *as the founder of the Particular Baptist Churches in England!* To him belongs the distinguished honour of being called "the repairer of the breach, and the restorer of paths to dwell in."* And what an exemplification of the divine promise has the vast increase of the Baptist churches exhibited:—*A little one shall become a thousand; and a small one a great nation: I the Lord will hasten it in his time.* †

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* Isa. lviii. 12. † Isa. lx. 22.

# CHAPTER III.

1641—1660.

"The Lord maketh poor and maketh rich; he killeth, and his hands make whole." 1. *Sam.* ii. 6.

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THE subject of our memoir must now be considered as having reached the twenty-fifth year of his age; as being the pastor of a church, engaged in a secular employment, with the cares of a young family; exposed daily to insults from an ignorant populace, and to imprisonment from persecuting prelates, and a tyrannical monarch; but "strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might," determined to obey God rather than men; and to submit patiently to whatever trials or afflictions might await him. He thus proceeds in his relation:—

"It pleased God about this time to visit me with a great and sore fit of sickness; all my friends giving me up as a dying man: my physicians also thought the same. By the persuasion of a friend, who was well acquainted with Doctor Trigg, my wife was prevailed with to go to him. On his seeing me, he told her that I was in a dangerous condition, and that he would not meddle with me. But as my other physicians had given me over, after very many persuasions, he did undertake me, and it pleased God to bless the means used to effect my restoration. What increased the affliction was, that my own and my wife's relations had concluded, that by reason of my judgment and practice in religion, *differing as I did from the nation in general*, that I should be undone, and my wife and children would fall to their care; my relations therefore kept what I should have received, in their own hands,

and my wife's parents kept back also what portion I should have had with her; which put me to great straits.

"It was for nearly three months that Dr. Trigg had me under his care; coming many times twice in the day, and generally once every day, but would take nothing either for his visits or for his medicines: telling my wife he would take it altogether when I was well. My wife has told me, that often when she has gone to him for me, she has seen some come to him in a coach, and offer him two twenty shilling pieces in gold, to go with them to visit a sick person, which he has refused, saying, there were many people in his house waiting for him; and yet he has instantly left all of them, telling them to stay for him, while he has come to observe the working of my fits.

"When it pleased God to restore me to some strength, I was not a little troubled to consider that I had a very large score to pay the doctor, and how to pay it I knew not; I was very loth also to borrow, not knowing how to pay it again; and when to get the money out of the hands of my relations, I knew not. But perceive, the Lord was exceedingly good to me; for although the hearts of my relations were shut up against me, it pleased God to deal with me herein, far beyond my thoughts. Desiring to know of the doctor what I owed him, he would receive no more than a French crown! I thought he had jested with me, but he insisted he would have no more: what should have moved him to take so small a matter I know not: but this seemed exceedingly wonderful to me, that a man who was a stranger, with whom I had never spoken before in my life, should show such kindness to me. He hath since told me, that in all his life, he was never more engaged to save the life of any man so much as mine. This providence I looked upon to be very great to me at that time, and did wonderfully lead me to cleave unto the Lord in the discharge of my duty, that good word

being made good—*Trust in the Lord, and do good, and verily thou shalt be fed.*

"It pleased God, after I was thus raised up from my affliction, to provide some employment for me; and in the year 1645, I went over to Holland with some small commodity, from which I found good profit.* But coming home again, I was greatly pressed by the people with whom I was a member, to continue with them, which I did, omitting that opportunity of proceeding in that trade, spending my time chiefly in studying the word of God, until I had spent the most part of what I had got; my wife also diligently employing herself to get what she could, that we might eat our own bread, and not be burdensome to any.

"At the end of the year 1645, seeing no way of subsistence, and that I was likely to be reduced to a very low condition in the world, observing that a young man belonging to the congregation walked very soberly, although he had but very little in the world; I discoursed with him about his going over to Holland, which I found him very willing to do, taking with him such commodity which I at first had found so profitable. And although our stakes were very little, it pleased God so to bless our endeavours, as from scores of pounds to bring it to many hundreds and thousands of pounds: giving me more of this world than ever I could have thought to have enjoyed. By which means I was enabled to improve the small talent God gave me, without being burdensome to any: making me able to give without receiving, which I bless the Lord he hath in some measure given me a heart to do. And whilst others, under the said differences which then existed, raised their estates by public places and public lands;

* This was the article of woollen-cloth; at that time manufactured chiefly at Exeter and its vicinity.

I stood in no need of the first, to wit, public places, and always was wary of meddling with any public lands, which by the good providence of God, proved very advantageous to me, as will hereafter be related more particularly.* Only one thing I think necessary to mention, to take off some aspersions that have been cast upon me, which was, that I raised my estate by obtaining orders to bring in prohibited goods, which other men could not do, and which I obtained from the Long Parliament and the Protector; which was a scandal upon me, for I never received any but such as were common to all other men, be they whom they would.

"The first order I obtained, was upon making 'the Act of Navigation,'† prohibiting all goods to be brought in but in English shipping, of the growth or manufacture of the place from whence they came. Being but five weeks between the passing of the Act, and its coming into operation, I, with many others, had, before it was passed, shipped several parcels of goods, which were liable to be seized if they arrived after the limited time. The winds continuing very contrary, our ships could not come in within the time. Wherefore myself and other merchants petitioned, that in case these goods came in after the time, the penalty of the act might not be enforced: and arriving after the Act had taken place, the Council of State ordered that all who could make oath their goods were shipped before, should have them, notwithstanding the Act. As many as could do so, received their goods, and I also had mine, upon making the said oath. These were all the orders I had, and every man in my condition had also the same.

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* In Noble's History of the House of Cromwell, vol. ii. 402, it is said, that "Mr. Kiffin was, in the year 1647, entrusted by the parliament to be an assessor for their taxes, to be raised for Middlesex."

† In the year 1651, by what was called the "Little Parliament," or "Barebone's Parliament."

"When the first war between England and Holland broke out, the Hollanders had, by the compliance of the Swedes and Danes, bought up all the pitch, tar, hemp, and cordage, to prevent the Parliament from being able to supply their fleet. Upon which, the Council of State issued an order, that all merchants that would bring in any of the said articles, should have orders to bring in any other sort of prohibited goods, proportionable in value to the above mentioned goods: which order every man received who applied for it, and by means thereof, the Parliament was furnished with all things belonging to shipping during that war. That order I, with many others, took, and enjoyed the benefit of it: such order being given, not from considerations of favour, but of state policy. Other orders beside these two I never had any from the Parliament, and from the Protector I obtained not any; neither did I desire any; but whatever I had, was in common with all other merchants. I the rather give some account of this, to satisfy all hereafter, that what estate God hath blessed me withal, hath been by his good hand upon my lawful employments."

The extracts from Mr. Kiffin's manuscript, in this chapter, comprehend a period of about twenty years, from the commencement of the disputes between Charles I. and his Parliament in 1640, and the restoration of Charles II. in 1660.

It will be expected that Mr. Kiffin, from the surprising change which had taken place in his property, could not pass through such a change as had taken place, both in the religious and political state of the nation, without being considerably distinguished and envied, both as a leading minister, and an opulent merchant.

We find his name affixed first to a Confession of Faith, set forth in the year 1643, and reprinted in several subsequent years, by seven Baptist congregations in the city of London. This confession, in 1646, was presented

to the Parliament, addressed "To the Right Honourable the Knights, Citizens, and Burgesses, in Parliament assembled;" and which was licensed by public authority.

I give the concluding paragraph of this confession, most likely written by Mr. Kiffin, which expresses the spirit and sentiments of the denomination ever since that period, and at the present moment:—"Also we confess, that we know but in part, and that we are ignorant of many things that we desire and seek to know; and if any shall do us that friendly part, to shew us from the word God that which we see not, we shall have cause to be thankful unto God and them. But if any man shall impose upon us any thing that we see not to be commanded by the Lord Jesus, we should, in his strength, rather embrace all reproaches and tortures of men, to be stripped of all our outward comforts, and, if it were possible, to die a thousand deaths, rather than do any thing against the truths of God, or against the light of our conscience. And if any shall call any thing we have said *heresy*, then do we, with the apostle, acknowledge, 'that after the way which they call *heresy*, so worship we the God of our fathers,' disclaiming all heresies rightly so called, because they are against Christ; and desiring to be steadfast and immoveable, always abounding in obedience to Christ, knowing our labour shall not be in vain in the Lord."

From the third edition of this Confession in 1651, to which Mr. Kiffin's name is first signed, I extract the title to an appendix:—"Heart Bleedings for Professors' Abominations; or, a faithful General Epistle (from the same churches) presented to all who have known the way of truth, forewarning them to flee security, and careless walking under profession of the same, discovering some of Satan's evils, whereby also wanton persons and their ungodly ways are disclaimed." In some subsequent editions of this work, the name of Mr. Kiffin follows those

of several others, probably to prevent any person from thinking that, from his wealth and distinction as a merchant, he assumed ecclesiastical domination.

The denomination soon increased wonderfully, so that, in a work, published in 1646, entitled "*Anabaptism the true Fountain of Error*," by Robert Baille, of Glasgow, it is said there were forty-six churches in and about London." He says, "under the shadow of independency, the Anabaptists have lift up their heads, *and increased in numbers above all the sects in the land:—They are a people very fond of religious liberty, and very unwilling to be brought under the bondage of the judgment of any other.*"

That most eminent man, the most learned scholar, and most powerful writer in the kingdom, JOHN MILTON, was, at the time referred to in the above extract, a member of the denomination.

The most violent writer against the "Sectaries" of this period, was the author of a work entitled "Gangræna," a man whom Milton calls, most appropriately, "shallow Edwards." He accuses Mr. Kiffin of many extravagancies, comparing him to a "mountebank," &c. &c. He says, "Another of these fellows, who counts himself inferior to none of the rest of his seduced brethren, one whose name is Will. Kiffin, sometime servant to a brewer, (whose name is Lilburn, who was lately put into Newgate, upon occasion of scandalizing the speaker of the honourable House of Commons,) this man is now become a pretended preacher, and to that end hath, by his enticing words, seduced and gathered a schismatical rabble of deluded children, servants and people, without either parents' or masters' consent. (This truth is not unknown by some of a near relation to me, whose giddy-headed children and servants, are his poor slavish proselytes.) For further manifestation of him, in a pamphlet called 'The Confes-

sion of Faith of the Seven Anabaptistical Churches,' there he is underwritten first, as metropolitan of that fraternity. I would relate, if time would permit, of somewhat I have had to do with him, in which he appeared to me as a mountebank." *

One relation which Edwards gives, in proof of his charge that Mr. Kiffin was a "mountebank," was his having, in connection with his most respectable co-pastor the Rev. Thomas Patient, "anointed a sick person," after the manner of the Roman Catholic clergy. He says, "One thing more (and it is most of all considerable) of Kiffin's new found light, so called, which I had from some eye and ear witnesses of his members, who were present at Kiffin's and Patient's visitation of one of their members, whose name is Palmer, living in Smithfield, and laying hands upon her did also anoint her with oil. The woman recovering, came into their conventicle house, and there, before many people, said, 'That physicians left her as they found her, but brother Kiffin and Patient anointing her, she suddenly recovered; for which, in that place, she desired thanks might be put up;' which Kiffin did also relate, and did, according to the woman's desire, return thanks. Many such heathenish and atheistical passages I could relate of this man, and some of his members, and some others, but it would intrench too much upon your patience." †

This "shallow" Presbyterian having, in his lectures at Christ-Church, London, declaimed against the "Sectaries," in a similar virulent style, Mr. Kiffin, on one of those occasions, sent the following moderate dignified letter to him, when he was in the pulpit:

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* Gangræna, part i. p. 6. † Ibid, part i. p. 6.

"*To* MR. EDWARDS.

"Sir,—You stand as one professing yourself to be instructed by Christ, with abilities from God to throw down error; and therefore, to that end, do preach every third day; [Tuesday.] May it therefore please you, and those that employ you in that work, to give them leave, whom you so brand, as publicly to object against what you say, when your sermon is ended, as you declare yourself; and we hope it will be an increase of further light to all that fear God, and put a large advantage into your hands, if you have the truth on your side, to cause it to shine with more evidence, and I hope we shall do it with moderation, as becometh christians. Yours,

1646. WILLIAM KIFFIN."

It would be offering an insult to the understanding of the sensible reader, to offer any remarks in vindication of Mr. Kiffin's character, from the base and unfounded charges of such a most virulent and abusive writer as Edwards, who thought it quite sufficient for him to blacken the fairest character, and asperse the most eminent ministers, provided they had adopted the congregational mode of discipline, and preached to a "gathered" people, in any of the parishes of the established Presbyterian clergy. I adopt, on behalf of Mr. Kiffin, and the treatment which he received from Edwards and others, because of his Baptist principles, an emphatical line of his contemporary, MILTON:

"By whom to be dispraised, is no mean praise."

Mr. Josiah Ricraft, a London merchant, and a bigotted Presbyterian, charges Mr. Kiffin with being the author of "an unlicenced, scandalous pamphlet," entitled "The Remonstrance of the Anabaptists, by way of the Vindication of their Separation, &c." In the reply to this, called by Mr. Ricraft, "A Looking Glass for the Anabaptists,"

the "Impertinencies, Incongruities, Non-consequences, Falsities, and Obstinacy of William Kiffin, the grand Ring-leader of that seduced Sect, is discovered and laid open to the view of every indifferent-eyed Reader, that will not shut his eyes against the Truth. With certain Queries, vindicated from Anabaptistical Glosses, together with others propounded for the Information and Conviction, (if possible) Reformation, of the said William Kiffin and his Proselytes."

These circumstances are mentioned, merely to show that Mr. Kiffin was so zealous in propagating and defending his principles, as to draw down upon himself the petty malice, and reckless vengeance of Presbyterian bigots, who could not endure that any sectary should be tolerated to oppose their sentiments, even though he was not a robber of their churches, nor a blasphemer of their goddess:—the divine right of tythes, and National Directory!

He was assisted in his church, during part of this period, by Mr. Thomas Patient,* and travelled in company with him through Suffolk, preaching the gospel. I find it mentioned by Whitelocke, that, in 1648, the House "ordered that Mr. Kiffin and Mr. Knollys be permitted to preach in any part of Suffolk, at the petition of the Ipswich men."

We find that about this time he was engaged in a public disputation at Coventry, on the subject of baptism. Dr. Grew and Dr. Bryan were on the side of Pædobaptism, and Mr. Kiffin and Mr. Hansard Knollys on that of believers' baptism. Crosby says, "It was managed with good temper and great moderation; both sides claimed the victory, and parted good friends: all granted that the Baptists came off with great reputation." †

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* Mr. Patient was after this, in 1640, sent by the Parliament as a minister to Dublin, with an allowance of £200. per year. He settled after the restoration as co-pastor with Mr. Kiffin, and died in 1666.

† Crosby's History of the English Baptists, vol. iii. p. 5.

It was his honour also to be persecuted for the sake of his peculiar principles. The Presbyterians had obtained an ordinance of parliament for punishing blasphemies and heresies. Mr. Kiffin appears to have been called to go on the forlorn hope on this occasion. On Thursday, July 12, 1655, he was convened before the lord mayor, at Guildhall, being charged with a breach of that ordinance, by having preached "*That the baptism of infants was unlawful.*" Mr. K., it is said, was treated by the lord mayor with particular marks of favour; and as the mayor was busy, he deferred the execution of the penalty required by the act, till the next Monday morning! It is most likely Mr. K. never heard any more of the matter. In a pamphlet published at this time, entitled "The Spirit of Persecution again broke loose," there are some facts mentioned to prove the partiality shewn by the magistrates towards Mr. Kiffin, as contrasted with their severity to Mr. Biddle, who was prosecuted for propagating Socinian errors. Mr. K. doubtless owed his deliverance, from the spirit of this persecuting ordinance having been restrained by the "instrument of government," agreed to by the Protector: viz. "That whosoever professeth faith in God by Jesus Christ, though differing in judgment from the doctrine, worship, and discipline publicly held forth, shall not be restrained from, but protected in, the profession of the faith and exercise of their religion; and that all laws, statutes, and ordinances, against such liberty, shall be esteemed null and void."

As to Mr. Kiffin's political sentiments, it appears that he considered it a christian duty to be in subjection to the powers that were established by the consent of the nation, whether the form of government was monarchical, or republican. In proof of the first, it is stated in the Confession of Faith before mentioned, "The supreme magistracy of this kingdom we acknowledge to be king and parliament,

now established, freely chosen by the kingdom, and that we are to maintain and defend all civil laws and civil officers made by them, which are for the good of the commonwealth. And we acknowledge with thankfulness, that God hath made this present king and parliament honourable, in throwing down the prelatical hierarchy, because of their tyranny and oppression over us, under which this kingdom long groaned, for which we are ever engaged to bless God, and honour them for the same."

There is a letter printed in Thurloe's State Papers, in the year 1656, which charges Mr. Kiffin with having intended to become a candidate to represent the county of Middlesex; but it is very evident it was written with a design to make him appear obnoxious to the Protector; and was probably sent by Mr. Kiffin to the secretary, to prevent any suspicion that he had indulged any such intention, or harboured any improper sentiments towards the Lord Protector.

It appears probable, that Mr. Kiffin had some commission in the militia, as he is called in the letter just mentioned, "Captain Kiffin;" and in a reproachful pamphlet, printed in 1659, entitled, "The Life and approaching Death of William Kiffin, &c." he is said to have been a lieutenant colonel of the London Militia. This scurrilous writer says, "If you compare his speeches in that mock parliament, with his exercises and lectures at his bedlam, you would wonder that one and the same man could be so silent and clamorous; but he was Will the whisperer to the one, and the bawler to the other."

It was at this time that General Monk arrived in London; and having taken up his head quarters near Mr. Kiffin's residence, he proved himself to be a troublesome neighbour. The particulars of this event, as related by Mr. Kiffin in his manuscript, will appear in the next chapter.

In Noble's "Memoirs of Cromwell," * it is said, "During Oliver's protectorate, Kiffin wrote to those of his persuasion in Ireland, to request them to live peaceably, and submit to the civil magistrate." This refers to the year 1653, when the Baptists in Ireland, and many in England, of whom were Major General Harrison, Colonel Hutchinson, Colonel Danvers, and many other strict republican officers, took great offence, on account of Cromwell taking upon himself the office of Lord Protector; because they thought the government of a single person, in opposition to the sole headship of Christ as King of saints.

I am not aware to what letter Noble refers. Mr. Kiffin and his brethren, received from his former colleague, Mr. Thomas Patient, in Dublin, and others, in the year 1653, a letter, which is printed in my history of the English Baptists, vol. i. p. 250, relating to the *spiritual* state of the churches. That letter was sent, with another letter, first signed by Mr. Kiffin, to the Baptist churches in Wales. There is no allusion to *political* events at all in this correspondence: the *churches* connected with Mr. Kiffin, whether in England, Ireland or Wales, never troubled themselves with such matters.

It is gratifying to find that this public spirited man was thus mercifully protected through this stormy period. It affords a fine illustration of the passage—"*When a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.*"

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* Vol. ii. p. 462.

# CHAPTER IV.

## 1660—1670.

"He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. *Psalm* xci. 1.

THE death of the Protector, Oliver Cromwell, Sept. 3, 1659, and the speedy resignation of his son Richard, paved the way for the restoration of monarchy, and the re-establishment of episcopacy. The confusion which attended these events, involved many excellent men in difficulties, who had not been implicated in the transactions which produced the previous alterations in church and state. Among these was the subject of our memoir, and it will be gratifying to the reader to perceive how the good providence of God watched over him, so that he could say, respecting all the dangers to which he was exposed, *But out of them all the Lord delivered me.** Mr. Kiffin thus proceeds with his narrative.

* When it is known that there were six Acts of peculiar oppression passed against the Nonconformists, in the course of twelve years, during this reign; it will be easily conjectured, that their sufferings were great and aggravated. The 1st was the "Corporation Act."—2d. "The Act of Uniformity."—3d. "An Act to suppress seditious Conventicles."—4th. "The Oxford or Five Mile Act.—5th. "Some severe additions to the Conventicle Act."—6th. "The Test Act."—This last still disgraces the Statute Book:—the former have been repealed. The above note was written in 1823. I am happy to have to state, that this last vestige of intolerance towards dissenters, was repealed in the year 1828, during the administration of the Duke of Wellington.

"Passing by many things, I shall now give some account of those several providences of God watching over me for good, since the return of his Majesty; at which time I considered that, having many enemies, I could not but expect to meet with very hard dealings, from men that envied my estate. But that God, who had given me occasion to trust in him ever since I lay upon my mother's breast, and had carried me safely along through many changes of my life, wonderfully wrought for me, and hath preserved me by his grace until this moment.

"A little before his Majesty's return, upon General Monk's coming to London, he took up his quarters near to my house. In a few days after, I, with several others, were seized at midnight by some of his soldiers, and carried to the guard house at Paul's: the next day it was rumoured in the city, that a great quantity of arms had been taken in our houses. As we were citizens, and not soldiers under his command, we thought it convenient to write to my lord mayor, Sir Thomas Almin, signifying to him the scandal that was upon us; having indeed had no arms in any of our houses but what was ordinary for housekeepers. We prayed him that matters might be examined into, and that we might not be detained from our callings, and kept prisoners without cause. My lord mayor was pleased to order the letter to be read at the Common Council, who, being satisfied of our innocence, sent some officers, desiring that we might be released, and our arms, which had been taken from us, restored; which accordingly was done."

As a proof that Mr. Kiffin had no wish to encourage any treasonable practices, we find him, soon after, signing a protestation, expressive of the abhorrence felt by the Baptists of Venner's rebellion, which they call "the late wicked and most horrible treasonable insurrection and rebellion in the city of London; and a declaration of their

loyality to the King, promising that their practice should be conformable."* They say, "It is publicly known that such of us as were called thereunto, which where many, were ready to hazard our lives to suppress them." We return to Mr. Kiffin's narration.

"For some time after his Majesty's return, for about six months, I remained in quiet. But when it pleased God to take away by death the Princess of Orange,† a plot was laid, which, had it taken effect, would have cost me the loss of life and estate. A letter was forged, purporting to be sent to me from Taunton, to this effect:—'That the Princess of Orange being now dead, they were now ready to put their design into execution; if, according to my promise, I would provide and send down powder, matches, bullets, &c., for that they believed the promise, that one of them should chase a thousand, &c.'

"In consequence of this letter, I was seized on a Saturday at midnight, and carried to the guard-house at White hall; no one being suffered to speak with me. There I continued all the Lord's-day, exposed to the taunts and threats of the soldiers. In the evening I was sent for to appear before General Monk, and several others of the privy council, who read the above mentioned letter to me; adding, I must needs be guilty of the things contained in it. I replied, that I knew not so much as the name of the man by whom it was said to be written; and that I did abhor even entertaining a thought of doing any thing which might lead to the disturbance of the kingdom.

"After examination, I was again placed under the protection of the soldiers, who were ordered to take me

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* Noble's Memoirs, &c. vol. ii. p. 462.

† She died December 24, 1660, at the age of twenty-nine years. King William III. our glorious deliverer, was her son. She was the King's sister, the eldest daughter of Charles I.

the next day to the lord chief justice Foster, to be examined. They took me to an Inn in King Street, where I was strictly guarded through the night.

"Under this dispensation, I found much support from God, and, knowing my innocence, I did not doubt but he would, in some way or other, work deliverance for me.

"The next day I was taken in a coach to Serjeant's Inn, to be examined: soldiers being about the coach, occasioned a great concourse of people, who enquired what was the matter: some of them shouting 'traitors—rogues—hang them all.'

"Appearing before my lord chief justice, I was strictly examined by him about the said letter: I answered all his lordship's questions, and then told him that I did not doubt but his lordship would take more pleasure to clear an innocent man, than to condemn one who was guilty; and I therefore prayed him I might have liberty to speak for myself, as I felt persuaded my innocency would appear. His lordship replied, I might speak freely what I could.

"I said that there were some things in the letter itself, which might satisfy him it was a forged letter. The letter takes the rise of the execution of this plot from the death of the Princess of Orange, and yet it was dated at Taunton three days before she died. To which his lordship replied, it was indeed a weighty observation, and seeing the date of the letter to be as I had stated, observed that might be but a mistake in the date, and yet the letter itself might be true. To which I answered, I should leave that to his honour's consideration; but there was one thing more, in which, with submission to his lordship's judgment, there could be no mistake: that was, there could be no letter written from London to Taunton, and an answer to it be obtained from Taunton, from the time of the death of the Princess to the time when I was taken;

for his lordship knew the Princess died on the Monday night. Now, no letter could give advice of it by post till the next night; and no answer could be obtained to that letter till the next Monday morning;* but I was seized the Saturday night after her death, which must needs be before any post came in. Upon which my lord looked very steadfastly upon the lieutenant-colonel, whose prisoner I was, and the said officer desired my lord to put me upon my oath. His lordship replied in great anger, he would not; and that things were come to a fine pass, when a lord chief justice must be instructed by a soldier what he ought to do; telling him it was a *trepan*. And then directing his speech to me, he said, he was persuaded I was abused, and that if I could find out the authors of the said letter, he would punish them: and so he discharged me. Mr. Henry Jessey† and Mr. Crape, were also mentioned in the letter, who were also examined and discharged. Thus did God work deliverance for me, and ensnared those who contrived the letter, in the work of their own hands: and we, having escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowler, had great cause to praise his holy name."

The demon of persecution was now let loose, and the unprotected dissenters, "the quiet in the land," were hunted as a partridge upon the mountains, and in many instances were compelled to sacrifice their liberties, their property,

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* According to this statement, it required seven days for letters to pass to and from Taunton: How different the facilities for correspondence at the present time.

† The Rev. Henry Jessey was the intimate friend of Mr. Kiffin, and an eminent Baptist minister. He was ejected from the parish living of St. George's, Southwark, at the Restoration; and September 4, 1663, died in prison, full of peace and glory, in the sixty-third year of his age.

and in some cases their lives, to gratify, if not to satisfy, the implacable malice of those who were saying of their principles, as the enemies of old of Zion, "Raze it, raze it, to the very foundations." *

Mr. Kiffin, in relating the events of the year 1661, says, "A little after this, being at a meeting on a Lord's-day, in Shoreditch, we were apprehended and carried before Sir Thomas Bide, by whom I and some others were committed to the new prison; but having been in confinement about three or four days, I was by him released."

This excellent man being engaged in large mercantile pursuits, had acquired such extensive knowledge respecting commerce, and so much information as to the foreign trade of the kingdom, as to be looked up to for his advice, on matters which were likely to affect the interests of the nation. He was of opinion, that monopoly would prove injurious to the nation's welfare; and that a free trade, by promoting competition among merchants, was the best policy for the government to pursue. A matter of this kind he proceeds to relate.

"It pleased God to give me respite from trouble for some time; but, by the providence of God, I was called to manage another affair, that might have led to my ruin. The Hamburgh Company at this time strove very much to get themselves established, and prevailed with the King to issue a royal proclamation, that none should export to Holland and Germany any woollen manufactures but themselves. This measure led the merchants of Exeter, and other places in the West of England, to write to their representatives in Parliament to oppose that pro-

* This refers to the effects of the "Corporation Act." This act required that all who bore office in any corporation, &c. &c. should take the oaths of allegiance and supremacy, renounce the solemn league and covenant, and declare that it was not lawful to take up arms against the King, *upon any pretence whatever*."

ceeding, as greatly obstructing their trade, referring to me for information respecting the business. I was accordingly sent for by them on the day the matter was heard in a grand committee in the House of Commons. At their request I went down to the house, and after speaking with several of them, they desired me to be present at the debate. I told them that by reason of my circumstances in other respects, I was no way suitable to appear publicly in the business, but would privately offer them my reasons against it. Still they pressed me to be present at the hearing, with which I complied. During the discussion, one of the members desired the chairman to call upon me, to know what information I could give the committee in that matter? I accordingly gave what information I was able, and was commanded to be there again that day seven-night. After several debates, the committee reported to the house their opinions against the measure, and the house appointed a deputation to wait upon the King, beseeching his Majesty to recall his proclamation. But the King, before he would consent to do so, ordered that it should be debated in his presence in the Privy Council. A summons was sent to me to be present, and several of the Hamburgh Company boasted that they would have me that night in the Gate-house; and I also thought, that being men of great interest, and myself so insignificant, they might prevail; but though man thought evil against me, God overruled it for good. For being highly charged, while in the King's presence, of having spoken against his Majesty's prerogative, and being asked by the council what I had to reply, I answered, that I was not conscious of having said any thing against his Majesty's prerogative, nor was I come thither to offer any such reasons: but being commanded by the House of Commons to give my opinion, why the confining of the exportation of woollen manufactures would be prejudicial

to the kingdom, I had done so; and if his Majesty pleased I should offer those reasons in his presence, I was ready to do so; else I had nothing to say in the matter. It pleased God so to order it, that several members of the House of Commons were present, who confirmed my opinion, that the monopoly would prove highly injurious to the merchants and clothiers of their respective counties. His Majesty was pleased to defer the further hearing till the next meeting of the council, and commanded me to be present. At this meeting, several of the Hamburgh Company laid many heavy and grievous things to my charge, of what I said in former times. To whom I answered, that in the late times I had concerned myself only in my own calling, not having advanced my estate either by public titles or public places, and that what I had now offered to his Majesty, and his most honourable council, was in obedience to his Majesty's commands, being those sentiments which I thought were for the good and advantage of the kingdom. But if his Majesty thought otherwise, I desired humbly to submit to his Majesty's great wisdom therein. It pleased God so to overrule things, that his Majesty and council were so far satisfied, as for the King to recall his proclamation; and this event, which my enemies thought to turn to my disadvantage, proved greatly to my good, occasioning his Majesty and his council to have a good opinion of me. My Lord Arlington* hath told me, that though, in every list of disaffected persons brought him, who ought to be secured, my name was always among them, yet the King would never believe any thing against me; my lord

* Dr. Burnet says "He was a proud man. His parts were solid, but not quick. He had the art of observing the king's temper, and managing it, beyond all the men of that time. He was believed a Papist: he had once professed it; and when he died, he again reconciled himself to that church."—*Life and Times*, vol. i. p. 99.

chancellor also, the Earl of Clarendon, being very much my friend." *

The interest which Mr. Kiffin had with the chancellor and the King, was turned on one occasion to good account. Some mad magistrates at Aylesbury, in 1664, dressed with a little brief authority, had acted so rigorously upon an act of the 35th of Elizabeth, that they had actually committed twelve persons, (ten men and two women,) Baptists, to prison, and had proceeded to pass *sentence of death* upon them. Mr. Thomas Monk, who knew Mr. Kiffin, rode instantly to London, and begged him to lay the matter before the chancellor. He did so, and the King, on being informed of it, expressed his surprise that any of his subjects should be sentenced to death for their religion, and immediately ordered their pardon and liberation, which was not attended to till the next assizes.† Mr. Kiffin thus continues his narrative:—

"About a year after the affair of the monopoly, I met with another great trial, wherein my enemies aimed at nothing less than my life. About midnight I was seized by Mr. Wickham, one of the messengers of the Privy Council, by order of the Duke of Buckingham.‡ By him.

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* Dr. Burnett says, that "the King did so entirely trust the Earl of Clarendon, that he left all to his care, and submitted to his advices, as to so many oracles."—*Life and Times*, vol. i. p. 94.

† See the account of this strange affair, with the names of the persons, in my History of the English Baptists, vol. i. pp. 335—338. The justices appear to have acted upon that clause of the 35th of Elizabeth, which enacts, "That any person legally convicted of being present at a conventicle, if, after three months imprisonment, he should refuse to conform, or abjure the realm, he should suffer death as a felon, without benefit of clergy." It was upon this obsolete law that the celebrated Mr. John Bunyan was convicted, and under which he was imprisoned for upwards of twelve years in the common jail at Bedford.

‡ The following is an extract from Dr. Burnett's description of this nobleman.—"He had no principles of religion, virtue, or friendship:

I was given in charge to Mr. Clifford, a gentleman belonging to the duke. Many others, also, were seized at the same time. I was taken to York House, and continued there till the next night, under the care of soldiers. In the evening the duke came to me, accompanied by several others, and told me that I would have hired two men to kill the King, saying, if they would not do it, I would do it myself; adding, if I would confess the truth, care should be taken that I should not suffer. I was greatly amazed at the charge, and returned the duke for answer, 'That I would rather he should charge me with the crime, than I should give the least entertainment to such an intention, so much as in my thoughts; for, I thanked God, I did abhor from my soul such a design against the meanest man in the kingdom, much more towards his Majesty;' and I further said, that the person could not be considered as his Majesty's friend, that should say a word of saving the life of any man, if in his wits, that should speak of any such thing! The duke told me, he knew I could speak well enough for myself, having so often spoken as I had done before the council; but what he had charged me with, would be proved by two witnesses; and ordered Clifford to deliver me to the soldiers till the rest had been examined, whose crimes, it seemed, were not so great as mine. I certainly felt some consternation, though I knew my innocence; but it pleased the Lord, whose care and goodness had been extended towards me in all difficulties to that day, greatly to revive me, bringing that Scripture

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pleasure, frolick, or extravagant devotion, were all that he laid to heart. He was true to nothing, for he was not true to himself. He had no steadiness, nor conduct. He could keep no secret, nor execute any design without spoiling it. He could never fix his thoughts, nor govern his estate, though then the greatest in England. The main blame of the King's ill principles and morals was owing to the Duke of Buckingham."—*Life and Times*, vol. 1. p. 100.

with great power upon my soul: Isa. xl. 10. "*Fear not, I am with thee: be not dismayed, I am thy God, I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee with the right hand of my righteousness.*" I was now so greatly quieted in my own heart, that my fears vanished, and I was made willing to submit to whatever the pleasure of God should be towards me in this matter.

"About two hours after, when all were examined, and several had been sent to the Gate-house, Mr. Wickham, the messenger, requested the duke that I might be his prisoner; it was accordingly so ordered, that I went to his house, where I went to bed and slept soundly. The next day my Lady Ranelagh came to visit me, to whom I gave an account of what the duke had laid to my charge. She advised me to write a letter to my lord chancellor, to acquaint him with my present condition, offering to carry it to him herself, which she did, putting the letter into his hands. The chancellor having read it, told her there was nothing of those things before them in council, and promised her that at the next meeting of the council he would lay the matter before the King and council. Accordingly, the letter which I had sent to the chancellor was read before the King in council. Upon which it was enquired of the secretaries of state, whether they had received any charge against me? On their declaration there was none, an order was immediately passed for my discharge without the payment of fees.

"The messenger at whose house I was, having attended the council, being more my friend than I could have expected, having received the order, brought me word of it, and discharged me that same evening.

"I thought that storm was over, and that I was again delivered out of the hands of wicked and unreasonable men. Having been informed of the kindness of my lord chancellor towards me, I went the next morning to his

house to acknowledge my obligations to him. While I stood without I saw go to him the Lord Chief Justice Bridgman, Sir Geoffery Palmer, his Majesty's Attorney General, Sir Henry Finch, the Solicitor General, and Sir Richard Brown. After some time I was called in, they being all present, when the chancellor asked me, whether I was not a prisoner? I replied, that I had been a prisoner, but was come to return his lordship thanks for his favour in presenting my case to his Majesty, in consequence of which I had been released. He asked me, how it was I was released? I replied, by the order of the King and council. He demanded where that order was? I told him the original was in the messenger's hands, but that I had a copy of it, which I shewed him. He told me, that there had indeed been such an order issued, but that last night, just afterwards, the Duke of Buckingham came and brought in his charge, and then an order was passed that I should continue in the charge of the messenger; and, therefore, I must return and render myself a prisoner again, and all he could do for me was, that I should have a fair and speedy trial. I thanked his lordship, and told him I was very willing to do so, knowing my innocence. He then wished me to go to the back stairs at Whitehall, and speak to one of the King's pages who attended there, and desire him to acquaint the King that I was there: and if I could satisfy the King to take bail, it was all well. I went immediately, not knowing what the issue of this thing might be. His Majesty was gone out, and I, therefore, returned to the city, and took back two sufficient citizens with me to tender as bail, if it were demanded, and hastened back again. As the providence of God ordered it, just as the King came into the palace the chancellor had come into the King. At the door I was remanded back again, and after I had waited about an hour, the messenger came and told me, that the King commanded him to tell me I

might go home. He asked if there was a messenger with me; on finding I had no one over me, he said that if there had been one he had orders to discharge me, but I must be ready at all times to come when his Majesty sent for me: which I promised I would. Thus did the Lord work deliverance by his own hand from that danger, and, I had reason to think, by the means of the chancellor. The page which brought me the first message, told me that the King seemed to be very angry with me. This great deliverance was cause for wonder to all that heard of it; for many who were taken at the same time, whose charges were not by any means so high as mine, were kept in the Gate-house more than six months; although nothing was ever exhibited against them from their commitment until their release.

"After this I was sent for by Sir Richard Brown, (who was a judge,) and I went immediately. He enquired where I had been that summer? I told him in London chiefly, but my family was at a kinsman's house in Hertfordshire, where I myself had sometimes been. He demanded, if I had not engaged those people with whom I walked* to enter into a covenant against the government? I told him the only end of our meeting together was to edify each other, according to our ability, in matters of religion, and not to meddle with any thing prejudicial to the government. He told me there was one present who would witness it; but I replied I knew there was no such thing. He then told me he would further examine the witnesses, and as I had come voluntarily, on his sending for me, I might go home till I heard further from him; but I heard no more of that matter afterwards.

"It was about the same time, at six o'clock in the evening, a guard being kept at the Exchequer, a party of sol-

* The church under his pastoral care.

diers came to my house, ransacking all my papers, and perusing them found nothing. But looking under my man's desk they saw a book, which they supposed had been hidden there; and, indeed, so it was by my clerk without my knowledge, which they speedily snatched up, crying, now they had found something; but when they had looked into it, they perceived it was entitled *Reynard the Fox;* which, it seemed, my clerk used to read. On discovering this error they laid it down again, and carried me away to the guard. Sir Thomas Player having the chief command there, asked me several questions, to which I returned answers. He said he had a special order to secure me, but if I would pass my word to be forthcoming whenever I should be sent for, he would let me go home. I told him I should always be ready to come; so I returned to my house in about an hour's time.

"After this, till this time, (about 1670,) I never heard of any thing having been laid to my charge of a political nature; but I have, through the Lord's goodness, been suffered to remain in my habitation in peace, enjoying the comforts of my relations, and what it hath pleased God to give me of the things of this world! I might, indeed, have noticed many other things, but being of the like nature of what I have already written, I omit" [them.]

The manuscript was brought thus far by the writer about the beginning of the year 1670, at which time he was fifty-four years of age. The pious design which he had in writing it, and the solicitude he entertained for the spiritual welfare of his children, is thus expressed:

"You may hereby see it is not vain to follow God in the way of duty, and to enquire betimes after the knowledge of Jesus Christ; for they that find him find life, and obtain favour from the Lord. And whosever walks in the way of God shall dwell safely, and be quiet from the fear of evil. This, to the praise of God, I can say I have ex

perienced, and I would not, for ten thousand worlds, if I knew my heart, but have tasted of the gracious ways of God in my younger days. Being sensible of the decay of nature, and the great inability that attends me to do service for Jesus Christ; therefore, the counsel I would leave with is: First, Have a care of your hearts, that they be not taken with the vanities of this present evil world. Your temptations may be more than mine were in my younger days, in regard that your means of enjoying it are greater; but yet, consider it will be an evil requital to the Lord, for the mercies shewn to your father, that what God hath given him, and which may be left by him to you, should be used to sin against that God that hath freely given it. Oh! let not that which your father hath received in mercy from God, be so used that at last it may prove a curse unto you. It is a portion of another kind which I have often prayed for from the hands of God for you, than to have your portion in this life: that Christ may be your portion, and that the years of your youth may be spent in looking after the one thing needful; this has been the desire of my soul to God. I well know temporal mercies prove great snares to keep many from Christ, and call for great watchfulness over our hearts in the enjoyment of them, as we are very apt to follow evil examples; therefore we are counselled not to follow a multitude to do evil. Our Lord Christ tells us, that broad is the way that leads to destruction, and many there be that find it, and many there be that go in thereat. Men need not be instructed to walk in the broad way, for they soon learn it from the corruption of their hearts and the subtlety of Satan. If any improvement may be made of what I have truly related of the several ways of God towards me in the course of my life, my design will be answered in leaving them behind me."

The remarkable events noticed in this chapter, and the

circumstances of imminent peril which attended Mr. Kiffin, and his astonishing deliverances from danger, remind us of those Scriptures: "When a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him;" and "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, and he turneth it as the rivers (or canals) of water are turned." It was not to be expected, that favour would have been shewn towards any persecuted non-conformist by such men as the Earl of Clarendon and Charles II. There must have been a very powerful conviction upon their minds of his uprightness and integrity—that he "feared God and the King, and did not meddle with those who were given to change." That he should have been preserved in such an evil time, both from personal harm and from pecuniary losses; remain at liberty to preach the Gospel, while thousands of ministers were driven into obscurity and silence; and continue to walk with his church and congregation, while so many dissenting congregations were scattered and dispersed, afford abundant proof that God stood by him and supported him, and by his power delivered him out of the mouth of the lion.

There is a singular anecdote preserved, respecting this laughing licentious monarch and Mr. Kiffin. The monarch, who was frequently embarrassed for the want of money, condescended, in his princely benignity and royal clemency, to request from his Anabaptist subject, the loan of *forty thousand pounds!* Mr. Kiffin returned for answer, that he could not possibly *lend* his Majesty so large a sum; but if his Majesty would honour him, by accepting as a gift *ten thousand*, it was very much at his Majesty's service. The King was quite willing to receive the money, and conferred that honour upon Mr. Kiffin, who afterwards used jocosely to say, when telling the story, that he had saved *thirty thousand pounds* by his liberality!

At the period to which we have brought this chapter,

the persecuting spirit of the parliament against dissenters was most severe. New clauses were added to the conventicle act, which caused incredible hardships to the nonconformists. The bill obtained the royal assent April 11, 1670. Many ministers were in consequence confined in gaols, large sums of money were extracted from their people, and many industrious families were reduced to poverty.

# CHAPTER V.

## 1670—1684.

"When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee."
Isa. xliii. 2.

THE subject of this memoir having been spared longer in life than he expected, and called to endure many sharp and severe trials in his old age, he, in the year 1693, resumed his narrative, being then in his seventy-seventh year. This chapter therefore records some of his domestic and ministerial * afflictions.

"It being," says Mr. Kiffin, "several years [twenty-three] since I wrote my former experience of the gracious dealings of God towards me, I hope it may not be unprofitable to give some further account thereof.

"It pleased God to take out of the world to himself my eldest son, which was no small affliction to me and my dear wife. His obedience to his parents, and forwardness in the ways of God, were so conspicuous, as made him very amiable in the eyes of all who knew him. The grief I felt for his loss did greatly press me down, with more than ordinary sorrow; but in the midst of my great distress, it pleased the Lord to support me by that blessed word being brought powerfully to my mind, Matthew xx. 15—*Is thine eye evil because I am good? Is it not*

* It should seem that Mr. Kiffin wrote another manuscript, which has not yet been brought to light: and which is probably lost. He says, "And for several trials which have attended me from those with whom I have walked for more than fifty years, (wherein I found the same kind hand of providence in delivering of me,) I intend to set them down by themselves, they being things more particularly relating to the congregation."

*lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?* These words did quiet my heart, so that I felt a perfect submission to his sovereign will, being well satisfied that it was for the great advantage of my dear son, and a voice to me to be more humble, and watchful over my own ways.*

"My next son being but of a weak constitution, and desirous of travelling, I sent him with the captain of a ship, an acquaintance, who was bound to ALEPPO. Fearing that in his voyage and travels he was in danger of being corrupted by those of the Popish religion, I sent a young man, a minister, with him, to defend him from any thing of that kind. But I was greatly prevented:—for this minister left him and the ship at LEGHORN, and went to Rome: by which means I was to my sorrow disappointed. On my son's return home, when at VENICE, he met with a Popish priest, and being forward to discourse with him about religion: the priest, to shew his revenge, destroyed him by poison. As to the minister's name, I forbear to mention it, he being yet alive:—*I pray God that this sin may not be laid to his charge!*" †

In the year 1679, the spirit of persecution against dissenters revived, and some new clauses were added to the "Conventicle Act,"‡ which were enforced with greater

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* This son's name was William, who died August 31, 1669, in the twenty-first year of his age.

† He also lost a daughter about this time, who is not mentioned in the manuscript. This was Mrs. Priscilla Liddel, who died March 15, 1679.

‡ Dr. Burnet says, in his Life and Times, vol. i. p. 270, "So now an act was proposed, reviving the former act against Conventicles, with some new clauses in it. One was very extraordinary. *That if any doubt should arise concerning the meaning of any part of this act, it was to be determined in the sense that was most contrary to Conventicles, it being the intention of the house to repress them in the most effectual manner possible.*"

severity than ever, by bigotted prelates, and cruel and oppressive magistrates. Mr. Kiffin was considered fair game for the informers, on account of his great wealth; but they found their mistake in seizing him as their intended victim. He says, "It pleased the Lord that the laws now began to be put in execution against dissenters; and as I was taken at a meeting, I was prosecuted for the purpose of recovering from me forty pounds. This sum I deposited in the hands of the officer; but finding some errors in the proceedings, I overthrew the informers on the trial. Though this trial cost me thirty pounds, it had this advantage, that many poor men who were prosecuted upon a similar charge, were by this means relieved: the informers being afraid to proceed against them."

Amidst all these afflictions, Mr. Kiffin had hitherto enjoyed the comforts of domestic life. His excellent wife, who had laboured with her hands when they were first united in marriage, and who had always encouraged him by her pious example, was taken away by death, October 5, 1682, aged sixty-seven years. Respecting this event, he thus writes:—"It pleased the Lord to take to himself, my dear and faithful wife, with whom I had lived nearly forty-four years; whose tenderness to me, and faithfulness to God, were such as cannot, by me, be expressed, as she constantly sympathized with me in all my afflictions. I can truly say, I never heard her utter the least discontent under all the various providences that attended either me or her; she eyed the hand of God in all our sorrows, so as constantly to encourage me in the ways of God: her death was the greatest sorrow to me that ever I met with in the world."

These strong expressions of parental and conjugal affection, set the christian character of Mr. Kiffin in a strong point of light. There have been instances of public men, who having speedily attained to the possession of wealth,

have been so engaged in the accumulation of property, as to appear totally destitute of tender affection towards their children, or even the wife of their bosom: self-love, and the love of money, have seemed to swallow up every generous emotion, and every sympathetic feeling. But this was not the case with this excellent man; the tender and melting expressions he has employed in narrating the death of his sons, and of his wife, prove that tears dropped from his eyes, and that grief wrung his heart with anguish while he wrote them. Would that all religious merchants, and even all ministers, were such affectionate fathers and husbands!

The quiet submission of soul too, which he evinced, arising from his firm faith in the appropriate scriptures, which so powerfully arrested his attention, (doubtless, by the influences of the Holy Spirit, who helpeth the infirmities of the afflicted and distressed believers in Jesus,) prove that he considered himself under infinite obligations to divine mercy; and, therefore, every affliction he met with short of hell, he considered to be mercy! Whilst his confidence in the wisdom of God, which had over-ruled all events, causing them to work together for his good, led him, with entire resignation, to say—*It is the Lord let him do what seemeth him good:—The Lord gave, and the Lord taketh away: blessed be the name of the Lord.*

Times of persecution again returned, and the malignant spirit, with renewed fury, seized upon the oppressed nonconformists. To this period [1683] the following account refers.

"It pleased the Lord, presently after the death of my wife, that I was again prosecuted by the informers for three hundred pounds, the penalties of fifteen meetings. They had managed this matter so secretly, as to get the *record* in court for the money; but finding there were some errors also in that record, they moved the

court, Judge Jenner being on the bench, to amend the record. Some of my friends, who were in court, moved that I might be heard before that order was made. In this way I came to the knowledge of the prosecution, and having employed able counsel; they pleaded that the record could not be mended; and after several hearings before the court, the informers let the suit fall." The conduct of Mr. Kiffin, displays great intrepidity in defence of the rights of Englishmen; and his success in defending himself against the harpies of the state, must have greatly availed to promote the liberty of the subject.

A bill of *indulgence* was passed in 1675, doubtless with a view to encourage popery; but the Baptists took advantage of it, and the London ministers sent a circular letter to all the churches in England and Wales, inviting them to send representatives, to meet in London the next May. This was dated the second of the eighth month, 1675, and bore the signature of William Kiffin and twelve others.

Many of the London Baptist ministers, and others, were sent to prison, because they would not fall in with this dispensing power, claimed by the king, to suspend the operation of the penal statutes against those who dissented from the church of England. Some of these worthies perished in Newgate,* and thus sealed with their lives, the principles they had for so many years zealously propagated.

"But the wise providence of God," proceeds Mr. Kiffin, "who orders all things as he pleaseth, reserved yet farther trials to attend me in my old age; yet, through his goodness, he hath been pleased to give me some

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* One of these excellent men was Mr. Thomas Delaune, author of the "Plea for Nonconformists," who was committed to Newgate, as the author of that celebrated work, while the sheets were passing through the press, November 30, 1683. His being suffered to die in prison, because his fine of one hundred marks was not paid, is a lasting reproach to the dissenters of that period.

measure of strength to bear me up under them all: and in the sharpest of which, I have seen goodness and mercy following me.

"Soon after the discovery of the Popish plot: the pretended plot was planned against the Duke of Monmouth, and the Lord William Russell, in 1683: at which time, my house was searched, and my arms were taken from me, which were no other than those necessary for the defence of my own household. Great enquiry was made from some of those who were witnesses against my Lord Russell, whether I had not a hand it? But none was found to witness against me; nor, indeed, could any one have justly done it. I was a stranger both to the duke and Lord Russell, not having been at any time in their company, or so much as knowing either of them, even by face.*

"Several persons, at that time, fled to Holland; and amongst those, Sir Thomas Armstrong.† At the request of some of his friends, a bill of exchequer was remitted thither to him, which, it was pretended, was sent by my son-in-law, Mr. Joseph Hayes, who was apprehended, and tried for his life. God, however, by a merciful providence, delivered him.‡

"While I was endeavouring what I could to help him,

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* Lord William Russell was beheaded in Lincoln's Inn Fields, July 1, 1683.

† Sir Thomas Armstrong was beheaded June 20, 1684, and his head and quarters set up on the city gates, except one quarter, which was sent down to Stafford, which city he had represented in parliament.—*Rapin*, vol. ii. p. 734.

‡ Bishop Burnet says, (vol. i. p. 533,) "Haies shewed a fidelity and courage far beyond what could have been expected from such a man. He made a strong defence: the letter was not exactly like his hand, &c. &c. Jefferies pressed the jury, in his impetuous way, to find Haies guilty of high treason; because, though there was not a witness against Haies, but only presumptions appeared upon the

coming to my own house, about nine o'clock at night, I found a packet of letters left for me, which my servants had received, about half an hour before; but who brought them, they could not tell: when I opened them, I found one directed to my lord chief Justice Jefferies, and another to myself: that to myself was full of treasonable words and threats, which, when I had read, I immediately sent it to my lord chief justice by a servant; as I plainly saw it was to trepan me. The lord chief justice not being at home, one of his clerks received them, and reading the letter directed to me, said he would deliver them to his master immediately on his coming home. He farther told my servant, that he thought he knew the hand-writing; which further confirmed me in the opinion, that they were sent with a base design. I never, however, heard any more of the letters, though I daily expected to have been sent for about them by the lord chief justice. Thus this storm also blew over, though it proved the ruin of my son-in-law and his wife in a great measure.

"Not long after this the King died;* [1684] and James II. succeeded to the throne. The summer after (1685) the Duke of Monmouth came over from Holland, and with a

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proof, yet Jefferies said, it was proved by two witnesses that the letter was found in Armstrong's pocket, and that was sufficient, though not appearing by circumstances. The little difference between the writing in the letter and the ordinary hand, was said to be only a feint to hide it, which made him the more guilty. He required the jury to bring him in guilty: and said, that the king's life and safety depended upon this trial. But a jury of merchants were not to be wrought up to this pitch, so he was acquitted, which mortified the court not a little."

* If Charles II. had any religion he was certainly a Papist. Dr. Burnet says, "He said once to myself, that he was no atheist, but he could not think God would make a man miserable only for taking a little pleasure out of the way. He disguised his Popery to the last."—*Life and Times*, vol. i. p. 93.

few armed men landed at Lyme.* A young grandson of mine, Mr. William Hewling, about nineteen years of age, who was at school in Holland, was one of them; entirely unknown to me or any of his relations. His eldest brother, Mr. Benjamin Hewling, having conversed with persons who were much dissatisfied on account of Popery being encouraged, and liberty likely to be invaded, furnished himself with arms and joined the said duke. In the first battle they were both taken prisoners, and were brought to Newgate, which to me was no small affliction. It being given out that the King would make only a few who had been taken examples, and would leave the rest to his officers, to compound for their lives. I attempted, with my daughter, their mother, to treat with a great man, agreeing to give him three thousand pounds if he would obtain their deliverance. But the face of things was soon altered, so that nothing but severity could be expected. Indeed, we missed the right door, for the lord chief justice [Jefferies] finding that agreements were made with others, and so little attention paid to himself, was the more provoked to use all manner of cruelty to the poor prisoners; so that few escaped, and amongst the rest, those two young men were executed.†

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* The Duke was a son of Charles II., a professed Protestant, and was considered by many to be the *legitimate* heir to the throne. They were only eighty-two when the duke landed at Lyme, but were increased in three or four days to two thousand.—*Rapin*, vol. iii. p. 748.

† In Noble's History of the Protectoral House of Cromwell, is given the following account of the Messrs. Hewling. "These two amiable, but unfortunate gentlemen, were the only sons of Mr. Benjamin Hewling, a Turkey merchant of good fortune, in London, who, happily for himself, died before them. After their father's death, they were most carefully brought up by a tender mother, and their maternal grandfather, Mr. William Kiffin, who, though very much advanced in years, as well as his wife, survived them both. The Hewlings and Kiffins were protestant dissenters, and the latter, if not the former, were Anabaptists."

"At the trial of William Hewling, the lord chief justice Jefferies was pleased, in public court, to tell him, that his grandfather did as well deserve the death which he was likely to suffer, as himself. I mention this, that it might be seen what an eye they had upon me for my ruin, if the Lord, who watched over me for good, had not prevented.

"When all other means had failed, to obtain the pardon of these young men, their sister, Hannah Hewling, who soon afterwards married Major Henry Cromwell, determined to present a petition to the King. For this purpose she was introduced by Lord Churchill, afterwards the celebrated Duke of Marlborough. While they waited in the anti-chamber for admittance, standing near the chimney piece, Lord Churchill assured her of his most hearty wishes of success to her petition: 'But, madam, (said he,) I dare not flatter you with any such hopes, for that marble is as capable of feeling compassion as the King's heart.'"

Their excellent grandfather, Mr. Kiffin, wrote the following account of these youths.* He says, "How graciously the Lord shewed himself to them, both in their behaviour before their trial and at their deaths, the consideration thereof to such as please to peruse it; I think it may be of use to leave it to you and to your children, and to such as may read the same, which is as followeth.

"The gracious dealings of God manifested to some in dying hours have been of great advantage to those living that have heard the same, giving them occasion thereby to reflect on their own state, and to look after the things of their peace before they be hid from their eyes; also a great encouragement to strengthen the faith of those that have experienced the grace of God to them.

"To that end it is thought necessary, by parents especi-

* This was published from Mr. Kiffin's manuscript, in a work entitled, "The Western Martyrology."

ally, to preserve to their children that remain, those blessed experiences that such have had which God hath taken to himself.

"Here, therefore, is presented a true account of the admirable appearances of God towards two young men: Mr. Benjamin Hewling, who died when he was about twenty-two years of age, and Mr. William Hewling, who died before he arrived to twenty years. They engaged with the Duke of Monmouth, as their own words were, for the English liberties, and the protestant religion, and for which Mr. William Hewling was executed at Lyme, the 12th of September, 1685; and Mr. Benjamin Hewling at Taunton, the 30th of the same month; and, however severe men were to them, yet the blessed dispensation of God to them was such, as hath made good his word, that out of the mouths of babes he hath ordained strength, that he may still the enemy and avenger.

"After the dispersing of the duke's army they fled and put to sea, but were driven back again, and with the hazard of their lives got ashore (over dangerous rocks) where they saw the country filled with soldiers, and they being unwilling to fall into the hands of the rabble, and no way of defence or escape remaining to them, they surrendered themselves prisoners to a gentleman whose house was near the place where they landed at, and were from thence sent to Exeter gaol, the 12th of July, where remaining some time, their behaviour was such, that (being visited by many) caused great respect towards them, even of those that were enemies to the cause they engaged in, and being on the 27th of July put on board the Swan frigate, in order to their bringing up to London, their carriage was such as obtained great kindness from their commander, and all other officers in the ship; and being brought into the river, Captain Richardson came and took them into custody, and carried them to Newgate, putting great irons upon them,

and put them apart from each other, without giving liberty for the nearest relation to see them, notwithstanding all endeavours and entreaties used to obtain it, though in the presence of a keeper; which though it did greatly increase the grief of relations, God, who wisely orders all things for good to those he intends grace and mercy to, made this very restraint and hard usage a blessed advantage to their souls, as may appear by their own words, when after great importunity and charge some of their near relations had leave to speak a few words to them before the keeper, to which they replied, *They were contented with the will of God, whatever it should be.* Having been in Newgate three weeks there was order given to carry them down into the west, in order to their trial; which being told them, they answered, *They were glad of it;* and as they went out of Newgate, several that beheld them, seeing them so cheerful, said, surely they had received their pardon, else they could never carry it with that courage and cheerfulness. Although this must be observed, that from first to last whatever hopes they received from friends, they still thought the contrary, never being much affected with the hopes of it, nor cast down, nor the least discouraged, at the worst that man could do. In their journey to Dorchester, the keepers that went with them have given this account of them, 'that their carriage was so grave, serious and Christian, that made them admire to see and hear what they did, from such young men.'

"A near relation that went into the west to see the issue of things, and to perform whatsoever should be necessary for them, gives the following account:—'At Salisbury, the 30th of August, I had the first opportunity of conversing with them. I found them in a very excellent composure of mind, declaring their experience of the grace and goodness of God to them in all their sufferings, in supporting and strengthening them, and providing for

them, turning the hearts of all in whose hands they had been, both at Exon and on shipboard, to shew pity and to favour them: although since they came to Newgate they were hardly used, and now in their journey loaded with heavy irons and more inhumanly dealt with. They with great cheerfulness professed, that they were better and in a more happy condition than ever in their lives, from the sense they had of the pardoning love of God in Jesus Christ to their souls, wholly referring themselves to their wise and gracious God to chuse for them life or death, expressing themselves thus: 'Any thing what pleaseth God, what he sees best, so be it. We know he is able to deliver, but if not, blessed be his name; death is not terrible now, but desirable.' Mr. Benjamin Hewling particularly added, 'As for the world, there is nothing in it to make it worth while to live, except we may be serviceable to God therein. He afterwards said, 'Oh! God is a strong refuge: I have found him so indeed!'

"The next opportunity I had was at Dorchester, whither they were both carried, and remained together four days. By reason of their strait confinement, our conversation was much interrupted; but this appeared, that they had still the same presence and support from God, no way discouraged at the approach of their trial, nor at the event of it, whatever it should be.

"The 6th of September, Mr. Benjamin Hewling was ordered to Taunton to be tried there. Taking my leave of him, he said, 'Oh! blessed be God for afflictions. I would not have been without them for all this world.'

"I remained still at Dorchester to wait the issue of *Mr. William Hewling*, to whom, after trial, I had free access, and whose discourse was much filled with admirings of the grace of God which had been manifested towards him in calling him out of his natural state He said, 'God by his Holy Spirit did suddenly seize upon his heart when he

thought not of it, in his retired abode in Holland, as it were secretly whispering in his heart, *Seek ye my face*, enabling him to answer his gracious call and to reflect upon his own soul, shewing him the evil of sin and the necessity of Christ, from that time carrying him on to a sensible adherence to Christ for justification and eternal life. Hence he found a spring of joy and sweetness beyond the comforts of the whole earth. He also said, that he could not but admire the wonderful goodness of God in so preparing him for what he was bringing him to, which then he thought not of; giving him hope of eternal life, before he called him to look death in the face, so that he did cheerfully resign his life to God before he came, having sought his guidance in it; and that both then and now, the cause did appear to him very glorious, notwithstanding all he had suffered in it, or what he further might suffer; although for our sins, God hath withheld these good things from us. But he said, God carried on his blessed work on his own soul in and by all his sufferings; and whatever the will of God were, life or death, he knew it would be best for him.

"After he had received his sentence, when he returned to prison, he said, 'Methinks I find my spiritual comforts encreasing ever since my sentence. There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. It is God that justifieth; who shall condemn?'

"When I came to him the next morning, when he had received news that he must die the next day, and in order to it was to be carried to Lyme that day, I found him in a more excellent, raised, and spiritual frame than before. He was satisfied, he said, that God had chosen best for him. 'He knows what the temptations of life might have been. I might have lived and forgotten God; but now I am going where I shall sin no more. Oh, it is a blessed thing to be freed from sin, and to be with Christ! Oh, how great were the sufferings of Christ for me, beyond all

I can undergo! How great is that glory to which I am going; it will soon swallow up all our sufferings here!'

"While he was at dinner, just before his going to Lyme, he dropped many abrupt expressions of his inward joy, such as these: 'Oh, the grace of God; the love of Christ! Oh, that blessed supper of the Lamb; to be for ever with the Lord!' He further said, 'When I went to Holland, you knew not what snares, sins, and miseries I might have fallen into, nor whether we should ever meet again: but now you know whither I am going, and that we shall certainly have a joyful meeting.' He said, 'pray give my particular recommendations to all my friends, with acknowledgments for all their kindness. I advise them all to make sure of an interest in Christ, for he is the only comfort when we come to die.'

"One of the prisoners seemed to be troubled at the manner in which they were to die: to whom I replied, I bless God that I am reconciled to it at all. Just as he was going to Lyme, he wrote these few lines to a friend, being hardly suffered to stay so long—'I am going to launch into eternity, I hope and trust, into the arms of my blessed Redeemer; to whom I commit you, and all my dear relations. My duty to my dear mother, and love to all my sisters, and the rest of my friends.

WILLIAM HEWLING.'

"As they passed through the town of Dorchester to Lyme, multitudes of people beheld them with great lamentations, admiring his deportment at his parting with his sister. Passing on the road, his discourse was exceedingly spiritual, taking occasion from every thing to speak of the glory they were going to. Looking at the country as he passed, he said, 'This is a glorious creation: but what then is the paradise of God to which we are going! It is but a few hours, and we shall be there, and be for ever with the Lord.'

"At Lyme, just before they went to die, reading John xiv. 8, he said to one of his fellow sufferers, 'Here is a sweet promise for us: *I will not leave you comfortless, I will come unto you.* Christ will be with us to the last. One taking leave of him, he said, Farewell, till we meet in heaven. Presently I shall be with Christ. Oh, I would not change condition with any one in this world! I would not stay behind for ten thousand worlds!'

"To another, who asked him how he did, he said, Very well, blessed be God. And farther asking him whether he could look death in the face with comfort now it approached so near, he said, 'Yes, I bless God I can with great comfort. God hath made this a good night to me: my comforts are much encreased since I left Dorchester.' Then taking leave of him, one said, 'Farewell, I shall see you no more.' To which he replied, 'How, see me no more? Yes, I hope to meet you in glory.' To another, who was by him to the last, he said, 'Pray remember my dear love to my brother and sister, and tell them I desire they would comfort themselves that I am gone to Jesus, and we shall quickly meet in Zion above.'

"Afterwards he prayed for about three quarters of an hour with the greatest fervency, exceedingly blessing God for Jesus Christ, adoring the riches of his grace in him, in all the glorious fruits of it towards him, praying for the peace of the church of God and of these nations in particular; all with such eminent assistance of the Spirit of God as convinced, astonished, and melted into pity the hearts of all present, even the most malicious adversaries, forcing tears and expressions from them; some saying, they knew not what would become of them after death, but it was evident *he* was going to great happiness.

"When just departing out of the world, with a joyful countenance he said, 'Oh, now my joy and comfort is that

I have a Christ to go to;' and so sweetly resigned his spirit to Christ, on the 12th of September, 1685.

"An officer who had shewn so malicious a spirit as to call the prisoners devils, when he was guarding them down, was now so convinced, that he afterwards told a person of quality that he never was so affected as by his cheerful cariage and fervent prayer, such as he believed was never heard, especially from one so young, and said, 'I believe, had the lord chief justice been there, he would not have let him die.'

"The sheriff having given his body to be buried, although it was brought from the place of execution without any notice given, yet very many of the town, to the number of two hundred, came to accompany him; and several young women, of the best in the town, laid him in his grave, in Lyme church-yard, September 13, 1685.

"After which, his sister wrote this following letter to her mother: 'Although I have nothing to acquaint my dear mother withal, but what is most afflictive to sense, both as to the determination of God's will and as to my present apprehension concerning my brother Benjamin, who still remains; yet there is such an abundant consolation mixed in both, that I only wanted an opportunity to pay this duty; God having wrought so glorious a work on both their souls, revealing Christ in them, that death is become their friend. My brother William having already with the greatest joy, declared to those that were with him to the last, that he would not change conditions with any that were to remain in this world, and he desired that his relations would comfort themselves that he is gone to Christ. My brother *Benjamin* expects not long to continue in this world, and is quite willing to leave it when God shall call, being fully satisfied that God will chuse what is best for him and for us all. By these things God doth greatly support me, and I hope you also, my dear

mother, which was and is my brother's great desire. There is still some room to pray for one; and God having so answered, though not in kind, we have encouragement still to wait on him.

Honoured mother,

Your dutiful daughter.'

His sister thus proceeds:—

"When I came to Taunton to *Mr. Benjamin Hewling*, he had received the news of his brother's being gone to die with so much comfort and joy, and afterwards of the continued goodness of God in encreasing it to the end, expressed himself to this effect—'We have no cause to fear death; if the presence of God be with us, there is no evil in it, the sting being taken away. It is nothing but our ignorance of the glory the saints pass into by death which makes it appear dark to ourselves or our relations: if in Christ, what is this world, that we should desire an abode in it? It is all vain and unsatisfying, full of sin and misery.'—He also intimated his own cheerful expectations soon to follow, discovering then and all along great seriousness and sense of spiritual and eternal things, complaining of nothing in his present circumstances but want of a place of retirement to converse more uninterruptedly with God and his own soul; saying that his lonely time in Newgate was the sweetest in his whole life. He said, God had some time before struck his heart, when he thought of the hazard of his life, to some serious sense of his past life, and the great consequences of death and eternity, shewing him that they were the only happy persons that had secured their eternal state; the folly and madness of the ways of sin and his own thraldom therein, with his utter inability to deliver himself, also the necessity of Christ for salvation. He said it was not without terror and amazement for some time the sight of unpardoned

sin, with eternity before him. But God wonderfully opened to him the riches of free grace in Christ Jesus for poor sinners to flee to, enabling him to look alone to a crucified Christ for salvation. He said this blessed work was in some measure carried on upon his soul amidst all his business and hurries in the army, but never sprung forth so fully and sweetly till his close confinement in Newgate. There he saw Christ and all spiritual objects more clearly, and embraced them more strongly: there he experienced the blessedness of a reconciled state, the excellency of the ways of holiness, the delightfulness of communion with God, which remained with deep and apparent impressions on his own soul, which he frequently expressed with admiration, of the grace of God towards him. 'Perhaps, my friends,' said he, 'may think this the saddest summer of my life; but, I bless God, it hath been the sweetest and happiest of it all; nay, there is nothing else that deserves the name of happiness. I have in vain sought satisfaction from the things of this world, but I never found it. But now I have found rest for my soul in God alone. Oh, how great is our blindness by nature; till God opens our eyes we can see no excellency in spiritual things, but spend our precious time in pursuing shadows, and are deaf to all the invitations of grace and glorious offers of the gospel. How just is God in depriving us of that we so much slighted and abused. Oh, his infinite patience and goodness, that after all he should sanctify any methods to bring a poor sinner to himself! Oh, electing love, distinguishing grace! What great cause have I to admire and adore it!—What an amazing consideration is the suffering of Christ for sin to bring us to God! His suffering from wicked men was exceeding great; but alas, what was that to the dolours of his soul under the infinite wrath of God! This mystery of grace and love is enough to swallow up our thoughts to all eternity.'

"As to his own death, he would often say, he saw no reason to expect any other. 'I know God is infinitely able to deliver, and am sure he will do it, if it be for his glory and my good; in which I bless God, I am fully satisfied. It is all my desire that he would choose for me, and then I am sure it will be best, whatever it be. For truly unless God have some work for me to do in the world for his service and glory, I see nothing else to make life desirable. In the present state of affairs, there is nothing to cast our eyes upon but sin, sorrow and misery; and were things ever so agreeable to our desires, it is but the world still, which will never be a resting place. Heaven is the only state of rest and happiness: there we shall be perfectly free from sin and temptation, and enjoy God without interruption for ever.'

"Speaking of the disappointment of their expectations in the work they had undertaken, he said, 'With reference to the glory of God, the prosperity of the gospel, and the delivery of the people of God, we have great cause to lament it; but for that outward prosperity which would have accompanied it, it is of small moment in itself. As it would not satisfy, so neither could it be abiding; for, at longest, death would have put an end to it all.' Also adding, 'Nay, perhaps we might have been so foolish as to be taken with part of it, to the neglect of our eternal concerns; and then, I am sure, our present circumstances are incomparably better.'

"He frequently expressed great concern for the glory of God, and affection to his people, saying, 'If my death may advance God's glory, and hasten the deliverance of his people, it is enough. Saying, it was a great comfort to him to think of so great a privilege as that of having an interest in all their prayers. In his converse he particularly delighted in those persons in whom he saw most holiness shining; also felt great pity to the souls of others,

saying that the remembrance of our former vanity may well cause compassion towards others in that state. In his converse he prompted them to seriousness, telling them that death and eternity were such weighty concerns that they deserved the utmost attention of our minds; for the way to receive death cheerfully is to prepare for it seriously; and if God should please to spare our lives, surely we have the same reason to be serious, and spend our remaining days in his fear and service. He also took great care that the worship of God which they were in a capacity of maintaining there, might be duly performed; as reading, praying, and singing of psalms, in which he evidently took great delight.

"For those three or four days before their deaths, when there was a general report that no more should die, he said, 'I do not know what God hath done contrary to our expectations: if he doth prolong my life, I am sure it is all his own and by his grace I will wholly devote it to him.' But on the 29th of September, about ten or eleven at night, we found the deceitfulness of this report, they being then told that they must die the next morning, which was very unexpected as to the suddenness of it. But herein God glorified his power, grace, and faithfulness, in giving suitable support and comfort by his blessed presence, which appeared upon my coming to him at that time, and finding him greatly composed. He said, 'though men design to surprise, God doth and will perform his word, to be a very present help in trouble.'

"The next morning, when I saw him again, his cheerfulness and comfort were much increased, waiting for the sheriff with the greatest sweetness and serenity of mind; saying 'Now the will of God is determined, to whom I have referred it, and he hath chosen most certainly what is best.' Afterwards, with a smiling countenance, he discoursed of the glory of heaven, remarking on, with much delight, the

third, fourth and fifth verses of the twenty-second chapter of the Revelations: *And there shall be no more curse; but the throne of God and the Lamb shall be in it, and his servants shall serve him, and they shall see his face, and his name shall be in their foreheads; and there shall be no night there, and they shall need no candle, neither the light of the sun; and they shall reign for ever and ever.* Then he said, 'Oh, what a happy state is this! Shall we be loth to go and enjoy this?' He then desired to be read to him, 2 Cor. v. 1.—11. *For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, &c.* His hope and comfort still increasing, with the assurance of an interest in that glorious inheritance, to the possession of which he was now going, he said, death was more desirable than life, and he had rather die than live any longer here. As to the manner of his death, he said, 'When I have considered others under these circumstances, I have thought it very dreadful; but now God hath called me to it, I bless him that I have quite other apprehensions of it. I can now cheerfully embrace it as an easy passage to glory; and though death separates from the enjoyment of each other here, it will be but for a very short time, and then we shall meet in such enjoyments as now we cannot conceive, and for ever rejoice in each other's happiness.' Then reading the scriptures, and musing with himself, he intimated the great comfort which God conveyed to his soul in it, saying, 'Oh, what an invaluable treasure is this blessed word of God! In all conditions here is a store of strong consolation.' One desiring his bible, he said, 'No: this shall be my companion to the last moment of my life.' Thus praying together, reading, meditating, and conversing of heavenly things, they waited for the sheriff, who, when he came, void of all pity or civility, hurried them away, scarcely

suffering them to take leave of their friends. Notwithstanding this, and the doleful mourning of all about them, the joyfulness of his countenance was increased. Thus he left the prison, and thus he appeared in the sledge, where they sat about half an hour, before the officers could force the horses to draw; at which they were greatly enraged, there being no visible obstruction from weight or way. At last the mayor and sheriff hailed them forwards themselves, Balaam like, driving the horses.

"When they came to the place of execution, which was surrounded with spectators; many that waited their coming, said, that when they saw him and them come with such cheerfulness and joy, and evidence of the pre sence of God with them, it made death appear with another aspect.—They first embraced each other with the greatest affection; then two of the elder persons praying audibly, they joined with great seriousness. Then he required leave of the sheriff to pray particularly; but he would not grant it, and only asked him, whether he would pray for the King. He answered, 'I pray for all men.' He then requested that they might sing a hymn. The sheriff told him it must be with a rope about their necks; which they cheerfully accepted, and sung with such heavenly joy and sweetness that many who were present said, it both broke and rejoiced their hearts Thus in the experience of the delightfulness of praising God on earth, he willingly closed his eyes on a vain world, to pass to that eternal enjoyment, on September 30, 1685.

"All present, of all sorts, were exceedingly affected and amazed. Some officers, who had before insultingly said, Surely these persons have no thoughts of death, but will find themselves surprised by it, now acknowledged that they saw he and they had something extraordinary within, which carried them through with so much joy. Others said, that they were so convinced of their happiness

that they would be glad to change conditions with them. The soldiers in general, and all others, lamented exceedingly, saying, 'It was so sad a thing to see them so cut off that they scarcely knew how to bear it.' Some of the most malicious in the place, from whom nothing but railing was expected, said, as they were carried to their grave in Taunton church, 'These persons have left sufficient evidence that they are now glorified spirits in heaven.' A great officer, also, in the King's army, has often been heard to say, 'If you would learn to die, go to the young men of Taunton.'—Much more was uttered by these good men, which showed the blessed frame of their hearts, to the glory of divine grace. But this is what occurs to memory. Mr. Benj. Hewling, about two hours before his death, wrote the following letter, which shewed his great composure of mind.

"'Honoured Mother,—That news which I know you have a great while feared, and we expected, I must now acquaint you with; that notwithstanding the hopes you gave in your two last letters, warrants are come down for my execution, and within these few hours I expect it to be performed. Blessed be the Almighty God, who gives comfort and support in such a day! How ought we to magnify his holy name for all his mercies, that when we were running on in a course of sin he should stop us in full career, and show us that Saviour whom we had pierced, and out of his free grace enable us to look upon him with an eye of faith, believing him able to save to the uttermost all such as come to him! Oh, admirable long suffering patience of God; that when we were dishonouring his name, he did not take that time to bring honour to himself by our destruction! But he delighteth not in the death of a sinner, but had rather he should turn to him and live: and he hath many ways of bringing his own to himself. Blessed be his holy name, he hath taught my heart, in

some measure, to be conformable to his will, which worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, which maketh not ashamed. I bless God that I am not ashamed of the cause for which I lay down my life: and as I have engaged in it, and fought for it, so now I am going to seal it with my blood. The Lord will still carry on the same cause which has been long on foot; and though we die in it and for it, I question not but, in his own good time, he will raise up other instruments, more worthy to carry it on to the glory of his name, and the advancement of his church and people.

"'Honoured mother, I know there has been nothing left undone by you or my friends for the saving of my life, for which I return many hearty acknowledgments to yourself and to them all; and it is my dying request to you and them, to pardon all undutifulness and unkindness in every relation. Pray give my duty to my grandfather and grandmother; service to my uncles and aunts; and my dear love to all my sisters; to every relation and friend a particular recommendation. Pray ell them all how precious an interest in Christ is when we come to die, and advise them never to rest in a Christless state. For if we are his, it is no matter what the world do to us: they can but kill the body, and blessed be God, for the soul is out of their reach. I question not but their malice wishes the damnation of that, as well as the destruction of the body, which has too evidently appeared by their deceitful flattering promises.

"'I commit you all to the care and protection of God, who has promised to be a Father to the fatherless, and a husband to the widow, and to supply the want of every relation. The Lord God of heaven be your comfort under these sorrows, and your refuge from those miseries which we may easily forsee coming upon poor England, and the poor distressed people of God in it. The Lord carry you

through this vale of tears with a resigning submissive spirit; and at last bring you to himself in glory; where I question not but you will meet your dying son,

BENJAMIN HEWLING."

Their excellent grandfather wrote the following account of these youths. He says, "It was a great comfort to me, and still is, to observe what testimony they left behind them of that blessed interest they had in the Lord Jesus, and holy confidence of their eternal happiness."*

In the work of Noble before referred to, are some additional circumstances, which, as they set the character of James II. and his inexorable judge in a proper light, are subjoined. "It has been said," observes Noble, "in most of the accounts which have been published, that lord chief justice Jefferies always treated Hannah Hewling according to his usual custom, with the greatest brutality; but this is not true: for Jefferies always treated her with the greatest politeness and respect. This instance, however, does not much soften the horror of his general character. Jefferies had a relation from whose fortune he had formed great expectations; and as this relation was an intimate acquaintance of the Hewlings, he exerted himself very warmly with him on their behalf. He repeatedly protested to the chief justice, 'that the continuance of his friendship, together with every benefit he might hope to result from it, depended entirely on his using every endeavour to save the Hewlings. This Jefferies declared that he did; but he always declared that the King was inexorable.

"When Jefferies was afterwards a prisoner in the tower, he complained to Dr. Scott, author of *The Christian Life*, and who visited him under his confinement, of his hard fate.

* The account was written about seven years after their death.

'I was hated (said he) by the kingdom for doing so much in the west, and was ill received by the King for not having done more.' He used almost the same words when he was applied to for the Hewlings. Burnet says, 'the King took pleasure to relate the cruelties of Jefferies in the drawing-room to foreign ministers, and at his table called it Jefferies' campaign.' At the return of this infamous wretch, he created him a baron and peer of England, as a reward for his faithful services.

"For many reasons it would be improper (adds Noble,) to omit what Mr. Hewing Luson has said of these two young men. 'The two unfortunate brothers, Benjamin and William Hewling, were the only males of their name, and of their family, which was in the highest esteem and popularity among the staunch whigs and dissenting protestants, at that time so numerous and respectable in the city. Their parts were excellent, and their education was the best that could be given them; their morals were spotless, their piety exemplary; their zeal against popery, the ardour of their courage in the field, and the manly meekness, and devout resignation of their deportment to the last, under their sufferings, concurred with their youth, the one twenty-one and the other not quite twenty, and the uncommon beauty and gracefulness of their persons, to place them the first in the list which was at that time called the *Western Martyrology*, and to render the severity of their fate most pitied of any who fell a sacrifice to the popish vengeance of James, though there were some other sentences much more unjust."*

We conclude this account with the sentiments of Mr. Benjamin Keach concerning them, who, from his intimate acquaintance with their grandfather, was well qualified

* Memoirs of Cromwell, vol. ii. p. 400.

to describe their characters. In his poem, entitled, *Distressed Zion Relieved*, dedicated to King William and Queen Mary, in 1689, he has this lamentation as the language of Zion:

"Now stop mine eyes, for fear your floods should fail,
And I want tears for all I must bewail:
But yet I need not doubt; springs I espy,
Yea, fountains which will give a fresh supply
For two young plants, who both sprung from one stem,
Beloved of God, I hope, as well as men.
Dear *Hewlings*, of what use might you have been,
If you to spare the Almighty good had seen!
What cruel tyrants had we lately here,
That two such tender branches would not spare?
But when I think of grace that they had store,
And with what patience they their sufferings bore,
It gives such comfort I can weep no more.
What testimony did they leave behind,
Of that sweet joy which they in Christ did find?
When wicked men all pity did deny,
Our Saviour to compassion's moved thereby;
And doubtless they are placed in that high sphere
Where the spirits of just men triumphant are."

There will be differences of opinion as to whether the conduct of the Hewlings was to be justified upon Christian and loyal principles. It is thought by the writer that they engaged in a just cause, and that their conduct was justified by sufficient reasons; no greater stigma attaches to the adherents of the Duke of Monmouth than would have attached to those of the Prince of Orange, had he been equally unsuccessful. The following description of the men who were engaged in this affair, is from a work written in the year 1691. "It is well known that many good men of most persuasions, of the church of England, Presbyterians, Independents, and Baptists, were zealously concerned in the Duke of Monmouth's time, and many fell. But know

that victory is no argument of the best cause, nor best men, nor a defeat an argument of a bad cause, or bad men. No better men in the world than some who fell in the duke's cause in the west; yet by the hands of one of the worst armies that ever was in the world." To this it might be added, that many, if not all, who adhered to the Duke of Monmouth, believed him to be the legitimate son of the late King, and therefore concluded he had a more legitimate right to the throne than the Duke of York; the grand reasons, however, were to prevent, if possible, the restoration of popery, and the establishment of despotic authority. A writer of that period says, "The securing the Protestant interest in Europe, and their own liberties in England, were the main causes why many, yea most, engaged in that design. If these were in no danger and had not been violated, they were rebels; if the safety of them could have been expected in any other way than by the sword, they were no better. Whether things were in that condition at that time, God and the world must be judges; if it were so, they were not rebels!" The papists and court sycophants designated them *traitors*, but the Protestant and constitutional loyalists called them *martyrs*.*

In Milton's "Sampson Agonistes," the following lines are supposed to allude to the sufferings of some of the most eminent of the republicans, especially Sir Henry Vane, after the Restoration; they are not inapplicable to some of those who fell victims after Monmouth's defeat.

"God of our fathers! what is man!
That thou towards him, with hand so various,

* The Western Martyrology; or, the Bloody Assizes, p. 102, &c. &c. fifth edition, London, 1705. To this is prefixed an engraving of twelve portraits, entitled "The Emblems of our Protestant Martyrs." Two of these are Messrs Benjamin and William Hewling.

Or, might I say, contrarious,
Temperest thy providence through this short course,
Not, evenly, as thou rul'st
The angelic orders, and inferior creatures, mute,
Irrational and brute:
Nor do I name of men the common rout,
That wand'ring loose about,
Grow up and perish as the summer fly,
Heads, without name, no more remembered!
But such as thou hast solemnly elected,
With gifts and graces eminently adorned,
To some great work, thy glory,
And people's safety, which in part they effect:
Yet towards these, thus dignified, thou oft,
Amidst their height of noon,
Changest thy countenance and thy hand, with no regard
Of highest favours past,
From thee, or them, or them to thee of service;
Not only dost degrade them, or remit
To life obscured, which were a fair dismission,
But throw'st them lower than thou didst exalt them high;
Unseemly fallen in human eye,
Too grievous for the trespass or omission;
Oft leavest them to the hostile sword
Of heathen and profane, their carcases
To dogs and fowls a prey; or else captived,
Or to the unjust tribunal, under change of times
And condemnation of the ungrateful multitude."

It is worthy particular remark with what confidence Mr. Benjamin Hewling spoke that the "*cause*" in which they died, would be carried on by other instruments. This expectation was fulfilled in a most singular manner about three years afterwards. The spirit which he and his companions manifested, even in death, in regard to the "cause," which they had in vain struggled to accomplish, entitles them to the designation of patriots and *martyrs:* as they lost their lives in opposing popery and despotism!

# CHAPTER VI.

## 1684—1688.

"He made a pit and digged it, and is fallen into the ditch which he made." Psalm vii. 15.

A fatal blow was struck at the liberties of England; when, in the year 1686, the judges, with one exception, agreed that the king was above the laws, and had a right to dispense with all penal laws on particular occasions; of which occasions, he, himself, was to be the sole judge.

The king, soon after, in April, 1687, chose to dispense with the penal laws against dissenters: some of the ministers in London were so desirous of liberty to worship God, as to think it right they should accept the privilege on any terms:* but the great majority resolved, rather to suffer as nonconformists, than enjoy liberty at the expence of the constitution. Of this latter description was Mr. Kiffin: who thus proceeds with his narrative:—

"This great storm being over, that which was intended

* By an assembly of more than one hundred Baptist churches, after the Revolution, this matter was explained. They say that no *congregation* of Baptists countenanced any of their members to own an absolute power in King James "to dispense with the penal laws and tests, being well satisfied that the doing thereof by his sole prerogative would lay the foundation of the destruction of the Protestant religion and slavery to the kingdom. But they acknowledge, some few persons, from their own individual opinions, used their endeavours to get the penal laws and tests removed, on account of the persecutions they had endured, and from being deprived of all their liberties, and denied the common justice of the nation; and with the hope of being delivered from the heavy bondage they had endured." The learned Dr. Nehemiah Cox, and several other respectable ministers, were of that description.—*History of the Baptists*, vol. iii. p. 335.

was, in a great measure, effected by the king and his party; for though there appeared no difficulty in the way of setting up popery, and that there would be little or no hindrance to that design; yet means were used to prevail upon the members of the House of Commons to promise, upon the meeting of parliament, to take off the parliament test: the only hindrance to Roman Catholics being chosen to serve in parliament.

"Therefore, a new project was set on foot, to engage the Protestant Dissenters in that measure, by giving them the liberty of their meetings, and promising them equal authority in the nation with others;* but this was in the tail of it, to engage them thereby to promote the taking off the tests, and to strengthen the *Popish interest* by setting the Protestant Dissenters against the Protestants of the church of England. This plot being carried on with all diligence took with several dissenters, but, indeed, they were but few, and, in general, of the meaner sort: William Penn being, indeed, at the head of that party, I, indeed, thought it my duty, to do all in my power, to prevent those dissenters, who were of my acquaintance, from having any hand therein; but the sense they had of their former sufferings, and the hopes of finding all things as was promised, could not prevail."

In this affair, Mr. Kiffin acted in the true spirit of a protestant, and constitutional Englishman. Whilst his principles, as a dissenter, led him to wish that all persons might enjoy the greatest possible degree of *religious liberty*; he would do nothing that would in any way lead to the Roman Catholics being invested with *political authority*:† and rather than help forward a specious plan

* This refers to the declaration of liberty of conscience, published by the King without consent of Parliament, April 4th, 1687.

† Since this was written, the test laws in regard to Roman Catholics have been removed.

for destroying the Protestant ascendancy in the government, he would submit to be himself excluded, in common with all Protestant Dissenters, from the immunities, honours, and employments of the state.

In August 1687, the king resolved to change the magistracy in most of the cities; and began by disfranchising the city of London. He not only changed the court of aldermen, but the government of most of the companies of the city. It is to this event Mr. Kiffin alludes in the following statement:—

"But, in a little time after, a great temptation attended me, which was, a commission from the king to be one of the aldermen of the city of London. I used all the means I could to be excused by some lords near the king; and, also, by Sir Nicholas Butler, and Mr. Penn, but all in vain. They said, that they knew I had an interest that would serve the king, and although they knew my sufferings had been very great, by the cutting off my two grandsons, and losing their estates; yet it should be made up to me, both as to their estates, and also, in what honour and advantage I could reasonably desire for myself.*

* In Noble's History of Cromwell there is an interesting and affecting anecdote in reference to this subject. He says, "Mr. Kiffin was personally known both to Charles and James, and when the latter of these princes, after having arbitrarily deprived the city of the old charters, determined to put many of the dissenters into the magistracy; under the rose he sent for Kiffin to attend him at court. When he went thither in obedience to the king's commandment, he found many lords and gentlemen. The king immediately came up to him, and addressed him with all the little grace he was master of. He talked of his favour to the dissenters in the court style of this season, and concluded with telling Kiffin that he had put him down as an alderman in his new charter. 'Sire,' replied Kiffin, 'I am a very old man, and have withdrawn myself from all kinds of business for some years past, and am incapable of doing any service in such an affair to your Majesty in the city. Besides, Sire'——the old man went on, fixing his eyes steadfastly on the King, while the tears ran down his cheeks——' the death

"But I thank the Lord those proffers were no snare to me. Being fully possessed in my judgment that the design was the total ruin of the Protestant religion, which I hope I can say, was and is dearer to me than my life. I remained, without accepting the office, from the time I received the summons to take it, above six weeks, until the lord mayor, Sir John Peake, in court said, I ought to be sent to Newgate, and in a few days after, I understood it was intended to put me into the crown office, and to proceed with all severity against me. Which, when I heard, I went to the ablest counsel for advice, (one that is now a chief judge in the nation,) and stating my case to him, he told me my danger was every way great, for if I accepted to be an alderman, I ran the hazard of five hundred pounds, and if I did not accept, as the judges then were, I might be fined by them ten, or twenty, or thirty thousand pounds, even what they pleased. So that I thought it better for me to run the lesser hazard of five hundred pounds which was certain, than be exposed to such fines as might be the ruin of myself and family. Yet did I forbear taking the place of alderman for some time, when the aldermen then sitting agreed to invite the king to dinner on the lord mayor's day, and laid down fifty pounds each alderman to defray the charge; which made some of them the more earnest for my holding, and they were pleased to tell me I did forbear to excuse my fifty pounds! But to prevent any such charge against me, I

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of my grandsons gave a wound to my heart which is still bleeding, and never will close but in the grave.'

"The King was deeply struck by the manner, the freedom, and the spirit of this unexpected rebuke. A total silence ensued, while the galled countenance of James seemed to shrink from the horrid remembrance. In a minute or two, however, he recovered himself enough to say, 'Mr. Kiffin, I shall find a balsam for that sore,' and he immediately turned about to a lord in waiting."—*Memoirs of Cromwell*, vol. ii. p. 463.

desired a friend to acquaint my lord mayor and the court, that I should deposit my fifty pounds with them; yet delaying accepting the office, which I accordingly sent them. When the lord mayor's day came, and the dinner prepared for the King, I the next day understood, that there were invited to the feast the Pope's nuncio,* and several other priests that dined with them, which, had I known they had been invited I should hardly have parted with my fifty pounds towards that feast; but the next court day I came to the court and took upon me the office of alderman. In the commission I was also a justice of the peace and one of the lieutenancy; but I never meddled with either of those places, neither in any act of power in that court, touching causes between man and man, but only such things as concerned the welfare of the city, and good of the orphans, whose distressed condition called for help, although we were able to do little towards it. We had frequently orders from the king to send to the several companies to put out great numbers of livery men out of the privilege of being livery men, and others to be put in their rooms; most of which that were so turned out were Protestants of the church of England. There has been a list of seven hundred at a time to be discharged, although no crime laid to their charge; that all men might see to what a deplorable state this city was likely to be in, had not the Lord by an eminent hand of providence prevented; for hearing of the preparations making by the Prince of Orange, the several charters to the companies were again restored to their former liberties."

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* The Pope's nuncio was Cardinal Ferdinand Dada. Dr. Burnet says of him, "He was highly civil in his deportment; but it did not appear he was a man of great depth, nor had he the power to do much. It was known he did not so much as understand Latin."—*Life and Times*, vol. i. p. 705.

Mr. Kiffin was alderman of the Ward of Cheap. He says "Although I was a stranger to most in the ward, yet I found more respect from them than I could have expected. Having been in that office about nine months I was discharged from it, to my very great satisfaction.

"My reason for giving this brief account of these things," he adds, "is, that you all may see how good the Lord hath been to prevent those designs, then in hand, to destroy both our religion and our liberties, and I heartily desire that both myself and all others concerned, may acknowledge the great goodness of God therein, that he may have the glory of all our delivering mercies."

Thus gratefully did this holy man pour out his soul before God for the astonishing deliverance brought about by the glorious revolution in 1688: an event towards which the firmness of the religious and political principles of himself and his family,—to which might be added, and the blood and estates of his noble-minded grandsons, had greatly contributed. Seldom do we read such a deep tragedy in real life as that of this excellent man, after the time that popish principles prevailed in the government; and seldom or never have we read of such firm and intrepid conduct in a man upwards of seventy years of age; whom no danger could terrify, no honours allure, nor any bribes blind his eyes or corrupt his hands. His conduct, too, as a protestant dissenting minister, is worthy of the highest praise; as he did not suffer his admiration of the principles of dissent, the rights of private judgment, and the inalienable liberty of conscience, to influence him to encourage measures which would have destroyed the protestant episcopal church, to the governors of which he owed no obligation, and for the principles of which he entertained no respect; but when he had to choose between an established *popish* or *protestant* prelacy, he well knew which to prefer. A writing, published by

the Baptists, in London, in 1688, to which his hand is first signed, contains the grand sentiment, that governed his conduct in all religious and political matters. "*It being our professed judgment, and we on all occasions shall manifest the same, to venture our* ALL *for the* PROTESTANT RELIGION, *and the* LIBERTIES *of our* NATIVE COUNTRY."*

The writer of an *Appendix* to the "Secret History of the Court and Reign of Charles II."† printed in London, 1792, says, "It is very evident, from the steps James took at that time, that he expected very little opposition from the clergy of the established church, whose sermons had so long been filled with the doctrines of *passive obedience and non-resistance.* He had no doubt but that the practice of those strenuous advocates for royal prerogative would correspond with the lessons they inculcated. To his great disappointment a few of the bishops made a noble stand in the cause of religion; *but had not the dissenters forgot their private enmities, at the moment of danger and alarm: had they not formed a generous coalition with the very men by whom they had been illiberally persecuted, popery and despotism would then have established themselves on the ruins of the British constitution.*"

It is shocking to reflect that the prelates and members of the church of England in the reigns of Charles II. and James II. should have devised and sanctioned measures, by which good subjects were hunted down like beasts of prey, merely because they objected to have principles forced upon their consciences which they could not approve. That persons should have had their houses

* History of Baptists, vol. iii. p. 336.

† Vol. ii, p. 130.

rifled, their property confiscated, their persons immured in noisome prisons, where many of them perished, while others were convicted without trial, others driven from their country, and some even suffered an ignominious death. It is astonishing that the high-minded English, as they have been called, should have manifested such apathy as to have suffered the patriots Sidney and Russell to be murdered; as it is certain they were condemned without sufficient legal evidence, and for an alleged crime, which, since the Revolution, has been accounted the highest virtue. The encouragement given by the government to the established church to destroy the nonconformists, had certainly dissolved the social compact, and would have justified the resistance which all ranks made to James II., at a much earlier period.

To give a perfect description of the joy and gratitude felt by the Protestant Dissenters for the "astonishing deliverance," as Mr. Kiffin called it, experienced by the nation, when the tyrant James was compelled to abjure the crown and leave the kingdom, is impossible. The "act of settlement," and "bill of rights," which the new sovereigns, William and Mary, accepted as the basis of constitutional law, were an ample security for the rights of the subject, both as to civil and religious liberty: and if the latter was not so perfect as it ought to have been, in regard to dissenters from the established church participating in the honours and employments of the state, it yet preserved them from *persecution*, and in the full exercise of the rights of conscience, both as to the public profession and propagation of their peculiar sentiments. All persons well acquainted with the nation's history, from the time of the REFORMATION, in regard to those called puritans, non-conformists, and dissenters, will pronounce, with feelings of ardent patriotism and devout gratitude, the terms "GLORIOUS REVOLUTION!"

# CHAPTER VII

## 1688—1701.

"And turneth the shadow of death into the morning."—Amos v. 8.

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THE liberty which Mr. Kiffin and his brethren enjoyed after the Revolution, was improved for the purposes of settling the churches and improving the state of the denomination. It is not, however, the intention of the writer to narrate the particular circumstances referred to, as they may be found at large in the first volume of his History of the English Baptists.

Mr. Kiffin and his congregation now assembled in the meeting house, near Devonshire Square, Bishopsgate Street. This place had been built by them, and was opened for public worship on March 1, 1686-7; the writer who records the circumstance observing, "when psalms were sung there." The practice of singing in public worship among the Baptists being then very novel, and was but just beginning to be attended to, and then not without great opposition; to the reproach of our forefathers, the introduction of this delightful part of Christian worship led to divisions in some of the most respectable of the London churches.

Mr. Kiffin was generally assisted in his pastoral office by some eminent minister. After the death of Mr. Thomas Patient, in 1666, Mr. Daniel Dyke, M.A. was his co-pastor, from 1618 till 1688. Mr. Richard Adams, another of the

ejected ministers, after the death of Mr. Dyke, filled that station, having been ordained in 1690.

The concluding part of Mr. Kiffin's manuscript was written in 1693, which thus proceeds:—

"Having tasted of the goodness of God, and his favour towards me from my youth; it being now sixty years since it pleased the Lord to give me a taste of his rich grace and mercy of Jesus Christ to my soul; although my unprofitableness under these mercies that have attended me hath been very great. The providences that have attended me are not to be looked upon as products of chance, (as some have done the deliverances they have received from God,) but as fruits of the care and goodness which God is pleased to shew to his poor people while they are in the world; as there is no design hatched against them for their ruin, but they are rescued from them by the special care and providence of God. And truly I may say, by experience, 'If the Lord had not been my help they would many a time have swallowed me up quick.'

"I leave these few instances of the divine care to you, my children, and grand-children, and great grand-children, that you may remember them with thankful hearts, as they must prove to the praise of God, on my account. I leave them, also, desiring the Lord to bless them to you: above all, praying for you, that you may, in an especial manner, look after the great concerns of your souls; that you may know God, and Jesus Christ, whom to know is eternal life. Endeavour to be diligent, to enquire after, and to be established in, the great doctrines of the gospel, which is of absolute necessity to salvation. I must every day expect to leave this world, having lived in it much longer than I expected; being now in the seventy-seventh year of my age, and yet know not what my eyes may see before my change. The world is full of confusions: the last times are upon us: the signs of the

times are very visible: iniquity abounds, and the love of many in religion waxes cold. God is, by his providence, shaking the earth under our feet; there is no sure foundation of rest and peace, but only in Jesus Christ: to whose grace I commend you."

The afflictions of this aged saint were not yet ended. In the year 1698, his son, Harry Kiffin, who had reached his forty-fourth year, was removed by death, and it is probable that Henrietta, wife of John Catcher, was his granddaughter: she died, aged twenty-two, in the year 1698. Thus "deep called unto deep," and billow after billow rolled over him, until he at length entered the harbour of peace and eternal repose by falling asleep in Jesus.

Mr. Kiffin lived about eight years after the period to which he brought this manuscript. There is no account of him during that time, except the following instance of his generosity towards some French Protestants who had fled on account of their religion, occurred in 1686, when Louis XIV. revoked the edict of Nantz, by which Henry IV. had secured to his Protestant subjects the full exercise of their principles. It is recorded by Noble. "He received under his protection a family of considerable rank, fitted up and furnished a house for their reception, provided them with servants, and entirely maintained them at his own expence. Afterwards, when this reduced family recovered some part of their ruined fortune, he would not diminish it a single shilling by taking any retribution for the services he had rendered them."

This worthy man died December 29, 1701, in the eighty-sixth year of his age. He was buried in Bunhill Fields. Upon the tomb-stone was the following inscription, preserved by *Strype*, in his edition of Stow's Survey of London.

WILLIAM KIFFIN,
Eldest son of William Kiffin, of London, Merchant,
(and an Anabaptist Preacher,*)
Died in the Lord, August 31st, 1669,
In the 21st year of his age.

Also,
PRISCILLA LIDDEL,
Wife of Robert Liddel.
And daughter of William Kiffin,
Who fell asleep in the Lord, March 15, 1679.

And
HANNA, late Wife of William Kiffin,
And Mother to the above named William and Priscilla,
Who fell asleep in the Lord, the 6th of October, 1682,
In the 67th year of her age.

And
HARRY KIFFIN,
Son of the above said William Kiffin,
Dec. 8, 1698, aged 44.

Also,
HENRIETTA, late wife of John Catcher,
August 15, 1698, aged 22.

And
WILLIAM KIFFIN, the Elder,
Of London, Merchant,
Husband to the above said Hanna,
And Father to the above said William, Harry, and Priscilla,
Dec. 29, 1701,
In the 86th year of his age.

It is probable Mr. Kiffin was the writer of many of the public documents which were published by the Baptists; as we know he was of several prefaces to some of their printed works. The letter to "Gangrene Edwards," as

* There is no doubt but this line was inserted by Strype.

he has been called, mentioned at page 34, was dated November 15, 1644, and printed upon a very small slip of paper, apparently as a hand bill. He "printed and published for publicke information," in the year 1645, "A Briefe Remonstrance of the Reasons and Grounds of those People called Anabaptists, for their Separation, &c.; or, certain Queries concerning their faith and practice propounded by Mr. Robert Poole, answered and refuted by William Kiffin." In the title page is this motto, "Sanctify the Lord of hosts," &c. &c. 1 Peter iii. 15.

This Mr. Poole, (who, I suppose, was one of the Presbyterian ministers,) had complained of Mr. Kiffin on account of his receiving his servants and children into his schismatical congregation. Mr. Kiffin in consequence addressed certain queries founded upon the principles of the Baptists to Mr. Poole, who replied by proposing certain others founded upon the principles of Pædobaptism and Presbyterianism. The answers to these by Mr. Kiffin make up the pamphlet.

In 1654 there was published a pamphlet entitled "A Discourse between Captain Kiffin and Dr. Chamberlaine about imposition of hands." From this title it appears that Mr. Kiffin held the rank of captain. This was in the city militia, in which it should seem he was subsequently advanced to the rank of lieutenant-colonel. In 1659, a letter, printed on a folio size placard, was sent to the lord mayor, in the names of Lieutenant-Colonel *Kiffin*, Captain *Gosfreight*, Captain *Hewling*, and Lieutenant *Somers*; this related to their having been imprisoned, and their arms siezed, by order of General Monk. It contains lists of the arms found in their respective houses, and intimates that their being Baptists was the only cause of their ill usage. Captain Hewling was, in all probability, his son-in-law, father of the excellent youths, the tragical tale of whose deaths has been narrated; of the others mentioned

I have no account; but it appears from some expressions in the letter to the lord mayor, they were of the Baptist denomination.

In the year 1681 he published a small work, entitled "A sober Discourse of Right to Church-Communion: wherein is proved by *Scripture*, the example of the *Primitive* Times, and the practice of all that have practised the Christian Religion: that no *unbaptized* person may be *regularly* admitted to the Lord's Supper." In the title page he calls himself a "lover of truth and peace." The following extract is given, both as a specimen of his style and of the temper in which this controversial work was written. "I have a witness in my own conscience, so I doubt not but I have the same also with those that know me, that I have made it a great part of my duty, as I have had opportunity, to persuade all Christians to love and peace, to avoid judging and reproaching each other under their different persuasions, to turn their heats and passions, which hath greatly abounded in our days, one against another, into prayer and supplication for one another, that although they differ in their light, it might not make any breach in their love. He that knows most of the mind of God knows but in part, for who art thou that judgest another man's servant?"

This work, I conjecture, was an answer to Mr. Bunyan's treatise upon open communion, entitled "Peaceable Principles and True." Mr. Kiffin thought that baptism was a *scriptural term of communion* in the church. Mr. Bunyan considered that a person *being a visible saint* was all that was necessary, and all that should be required by any church as the pre-requisite for communion. This subject has been a matter of controversy among the Baptists in England from that time, and still there are found ministers of equal piety and, perhaps, equal talents for

controversial acumen, advocating each side of the question. It is probable that the disputants will never be brought to any agreement upon the subject; and, therefore, it would be well, adopting an expression of a distinguished statesman upon another subject, "If we cannot see eye to eye, let us strive to meet heart to heart."

In his theological opinions Mr. Kiffin was a *Calvinist*, "holding," as it is expressed in the Confession of Faith adopted by the Baptist General Assembly in 1689, "the doctrines of personal election and final perseverance." These principles were prominent also in the Confession of 1644, (which, it is probable, as his name was first signed to it, was drawn up by himself.) The twenty-fifth article respecting the manner of preaching the gospel to the unconverted is thus expressed: "The preaching of the gospel for the conversion of sinners, is absolutely free; no way requiring, as absolutely necessary, any qualifications, preparations, or terrors of the law, or preceding ministry of the law, but only and alone [encouraging] the naked soul, a sinner, and ungodly, to receive Christ crucified, dead and buried, and risen again: who is made a Prince and a Saviour for such sinners as, through the gospel, shall be brought to believe in him." Again, speaking of *believers*, they say, article twenty-eighth, "Those that have union with Christ are justified from all their sins by the blood of Christ, which justification is a gracious and full acquittance of a guilty sinner from all sin by God, through the satisfaction that Christ hath made by his death for all their sins, and this applied (in the manifestation of it,) through faith."

It is very remarkable that the sentiments which were published in their earliest confessions by the Particular or Calvinistic Baptists, and which were repeated in the Confession adopted by the General Assembly of more than one hundred churches, held in London in 1689, have been the leading opinions of the great body of the denomination

at every period of their history. To the great and fundamental doctrine of the Trinity, and other correspondent doctrines they have invariably adhered; and the distinguishing doctrines of CALVIN, usually denominated the *five points*, they have as constantly avowed. It is likely there has been in some ministers and churches, at different times, a leaning towards the *Arminian*, or towards the *Antinomian* systems of doctrines; but, in general, they have believed and taught that "*the grace of God, which bringeth salvation, teacheth us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and godly in this world:*"—and that "*they who have believed in God, should be careful to maintain good works.*"

I have thus stated every thing, to the best of my information, relating to a man of whom the Baptist denomination need not be ashamed as its principal founder and most perfect exemplar in regard to the accuracy and consistency of his principles, the catholicism of his spirit, and the eminency of his character. Of him it might be truly said, in relation both to his life and death, that "*he was great among*" the Protestant Dissenters, and especially among the Baptists; "*and accepted of the multitude of his brethren, seeking the wealth of his people, and speaking peace to all his seed.*"

# APPENDIX.

## No. I.

### MRS. CROMWELL.

SOME particulars have been given of Miss Hannah Hewling, who attended her unfortunate brothers till their melancholy death. She afterwards became the wife of Major Richard Cromwell, the grandson of the Protector Oliver, by Henry, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Noble's account of her is curious, but evidently written under the influence of strong prejudice against a dissenter.—"The misfortunes her family," he says, "experienced from the severity of James II. and the fanaticism of her religious tenets, set her mind against the established form, and led her into some unwarrantable warmths. She, instead of copying the example of her husband's moderation, set herself openly against the establishment, turned out the clergyman that had been long resident in the family, and entertained, in his stead, a Baptist minister. Not content with this, she endeavoured to gain proselytes to her opinions; all which led Mr. Cromwell into such pecuniary inconveniences, as obliged him, soon after their marriage, to part with the Abbey of Spinney. It does not appear, however, that she brought over her husband to desert the established church."*

* Noble's Memoirs, vol. i. page 210.

On this caricature statment the late Mr. Orme remarks: "All this has been said of many as well as of Mrs. Cromwell, and in most instances, with very little truth. It does not appear clearly how the lady's conduct could ruin her husband's estate. She was a kind sister; she appears to have been a sensible woman; and from an original letter of her's, now before me, she seems to have been a good mother and an obedient wife. As it shews a little of the religious character of the writer, and also informs us of the very humble employment of the Lord Protector of England's grandson, I shall quote part of it for the reader's amusement. It is addressed to her sisters; and appears to have been written when she was recovering from an attack of ague. Her child also had been ill, and was under the care of his aunts.

"London, March 19, 1689.

"My dear Sisters,

"The good news you sent me in your last was very reviving to me. It was beyond my expectation to hear of the so sudden removal of his distemper. My great work now is thankfulness; which is indeed too great for an evil heart, without the assistance of the Holy Spirit. Let us pray for it, for each other. I should be the more thankful, from my present feelings, for what he did. I find myself very weak; and can but admire how God has continued his (the child's) strength so much through it. I have had five fits, which held me much about the length his did. I greatly long to see my dear lamb; but cannot be willing to venture him yet such a journey: and I am sensible the loss of your kind and pleasant company will be very mournful to him.

"I have little news to send. The parliament are taking the attainder of my Lord Russell: so I hope they will soon proceed to the rest. There are many regiments

preparing to go to the relief of poor Ireland, which is in great distress. I suppose you heard that my aunt Kiffin is very dangerously ill at Enfield. My brother Frank has an office in a regiment for Ireland, if he will be so wise as to keep it.

"I have made my scroll very tedious, but must yet add, that it is Mr. Cromwell's order, that Betty Gally go to market with the butter, and John no more, except at washings. He would have Harry go to Cambridge and inquire the price of hay, and send him word; and whether there are any who are willing to buy all he can spare, and pay ready money. He would also know in what forwardness all his business is. I am forced to trouble you with these things, which I hope you will excuse, from your obliged and affectionate sister, H. CROMWELL.

"For Mrs. Rebekah Hewling, at Henry Cromwell's, Esq. Spinney Abbey, near Newmarket."

"Major Cromwell died of a fever in Spain, in 1711. Mrs. Cromwell died in 1731. They had a family of ten children, several of whom survived them. Oliver Cromwell, Esq. lately deceased, and who published the valuable Memoirs of the Protector, was descended from this branch of the family."

## No. II.

### BENJAMIN AND WILLIAM HEWLING.

As every thing respecting Messrs. Benjamin and William Hewling will, I doubt not, prove interesting, I subjoin, though not quite in the proper place, two letters to their sister above mentioned, written from Holland, before they came over with the Duke of Monmouth. For these I am indebted to the notes affixed to the Rev. Wm. Orme's Memoirs of Mr. Kiffin.

"DEAR SISTER,

"I have waited with impatience, for this opportunity of conveying you my thanks for your kind letter, and for the variety of news it was freighted with: your joy for my safe arrival, and sorrow for my absence, testify no more than what I always conceived of my sister's love, having before received so strong proofs of her affection to me. There needs no other arguments to convince me that they are real, and still continue the same, than your saying they are so; and I am assured you entertain as kind thoughts of my love to you, and the sincerity of it, and without any difficulty will think me, as I am in reality,

Your affectionate brother,

Amsterdam, 2d April, 1682. BEN. HEWLING.

"Tutphaes, 18th March, 1685.

"DEAR SISTER,

"I have received your's of the 10th instant, filled with fresh tokens of the constant affection of my dear sister, and her ardent zeal for the well-being of her poor unworthy brother. For, dear, dear sister, I shall never be in a capacity to render suitable acknowledgments to these several obli-

gations laid on me. I find, by your kind letter, your joy for those few convictions that God, in his infinite mercy, hath been pleased to work on my soul; for, dear sister, I cannot but esteem it an infinite mercy, and a miracle of love, that God should put the least stop to my career in sin, when I have gone on without bounds, and have sinned so dissolutely against such light, and against such calls and former convictions that I have had. Others, abundantly better than I, have been cut off, and sent to their place, whilst I am yet spared. This is a mercy never to be esteemed of enough. I bless God I have found, since these convictions, that He hath been pleased to give me more backwardness to sin, and a little more love to holiness: but on the other side, I find myself very hard, and dead, and proud, and too apt to relish the things of this world; and I find the devil very busy to turn me out of the way, putting all manner of evil thoughts into my heart, which is too apt and ready to take with the least temptation. Dear sister, I do desire you, and also all my friends, to pray to God, that he would, in his infinite mercy, subdue my hard and proud heart; that he would regulate my affections, and enlighten my blind understanding; that he would, by his Holy Spirit, convince me, first of sin, that I may see it as it is, really vile and destructive, and the greatest enemy to mankind; that I may see it so as to loathe, and detest, and hate it; that I may see it so as to repent of it, and that with repentance never to be repented of; and then that he would convince me of righteousness, of the fulness of the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, of the fulness of his satisfaction for sin, that I may be so convinced of it as to go out of myself to it—that I may esteem all things as dross and dung compared with it—that I may take up the yoke of the Lord Jesus, and be a true and faithful servant to him—that I may follow him fully, never looking back, but be continually pressing

forward to the mark of the high calling, knowing that my labour shall not be in vain. Dear sister, finding my heart so dull, so hard, and so little inclinable to these things, I cannot but renew my entreaty, that my friends would pray to God for me, if He, who is the great changer of hearts, who hath the words of eternal life, would work this great and glorious change in me,—that where he hath begun a good work he would perfect it,—that I may live as a monument of his infinite mercy, and that I may ever bless and praise his holy name, which I hope will ever be the practice of, dear sister,

Your most affectionate brother.

WM. HEWLING.

"Pray my duty to mother, with love to brother and sisters, duty to grandfather, service to uncles and aunts, and the rest of friends."

## No. III.

### EXTRACTS CONCERNING MR. KIFFIN, FROM THE MINUTES OF THE WARD OF CHEAP.*

It has been stated, that Mr. Kiffin was one of the five aldermen who were appointed by King James II. when he disfranchised the city. The other four were introduced to the court by the lord chancellor Jefferies, on the 17th of June, 1687. These were "Sir Jeremy Sambrooke, Mr. John Litton, Mr. John Page, and Mr. Robert Bodington, instead of Sir Matthias Vincent, deceased, Sir Benjamin Newland, Peter Parrevacin, Esq. and Sir Thomas Griffith, late aldermen of this city, and discharged by his Majesty from the said place."

The manner in which Mr. Kiffin was introduced to his office, as alderman of the Ward of Cheap, is peculiar to his case.

"*October* 27, 1687.—Peake, maior, Shorter, maior elect, Daniel, Gostling, Kinsey, Thomson, Bawdon, Edwin, Kiffen, Mawson, Ashurst, Gardiner, Eyles, Underhill, Rodbard, Berry, Page, Bristow, St. Amand, Firebrace, and Parsons, sheriffs.

"This day Wm. Kiffen, Esq. constituted by his Majesty alderman of the Ward of Cheap, did make his appearance before this court, and was here sworne (by virtue of his Majesty's writ of dedimus protestat,) directed to this court, for the due execution of the said place."

I copy a few of the proceedings of the court which took place when Mr. Kiffin was present:—

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* By the kindness of a gentleman belonging to the Common Council, I obtained access to these minutes, with permission to copy them, at the Town Clerk's Office.

"*November* 3, 1687.—A precept prepared for preventing prophanation of the Lord's-day, and other disorderly practices within this city. And an abstract annexed made by direction of the acts of parliament against the same, were here read and approved of, and ordered to be printed and delivered to the several aldermen for the better putting the said laws in execution."

On the 31st of *January*, 1687-8:—"This court doth dersire Mr. Alderman Kiffin and Mr. Alderman Chamberlaine to sit upon the green wax* during the month of February next ensuing."

On the 15th of *March*, 1688.—"This court being now informed that the Royall Exchange below stairs used to be a good accommodation for poor French Protestants, who on the Lord's daies resorted thither from their church in the morning and there were wont to continue until church time in the afternoon. It is ordered by this court, that for convenience of the said poore persons, the gates of the Royall Exchange shall be opened on every Lord's-day for the future, untill further order of this court, at eleven of the clock before noon, and continue open untill two, and then be shut up again."

On the 27th of *September*, 1688:—"This day Richard Littleton, a yeoman of the Poultry Compter, for his great misbehaviour, and uttering most abusive and reviling expressions of the right reverend father in God, the Lord Bishop of Gloucester, is by this court suspended from his said place, and the execution and profits thereof, until upon his humble application and submission to be made to his lordship, his lordship shall be pleased to signify to this court that he hath fully remitted the said offence."

Mr. Kiffin appears to have generally attended the meet-

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* I have not been able to ascertain the meaning of this phrase.

ings of the court. The last time he did so was on the 2nd October, 1688; the meeting on the 4th concludes the records of this interregnum of the city's liberties. A new book commences with the records of a meeting which is called the—

"*First and Special Court, held 6th October*, 1688:—This day the R^t. Hon^ble. the lord high chancellor of England brought down to this court two severall instruments or grants under the great seale of England, for restoring the citie's ancient franchises and liberties. It was voted, that the humble thanks of this court be returned to his Majesty, for his grace and favour in the said grant and restitution, &c." It was also "Ordered, that wardmotes should be held, as soon as possible, for supplying the vacancies in the several wards now wanting aldermen."

On the 21st of *October*, Sir Humphrey Edwin was chosen alderman of the Ward of Cheap, in the room of Mr. Kiffin. This gentleman afterwards served the office of lord mayor, and gave great offence to the high church party by carrying the city mace to a dissenting meeting house.

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